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# INTRODUCTION

## TO THE

# LITERATURE OF EUROPE

IN THE  
FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH  
CENTURIES.

By HENRY HALLAM, LL.D., F.R.A.S.,  
FOREIGN ASSOCIATE OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE.

De modo autem hujusmodi historię conscribendę, illud imprimis monemus, ut materia et copia ejus, non tantum ab historis et criticis petatur, verum etiam per singulas annorum centurias, aut etiam minora intervalla, seriatim libri præcipui, qui eo temporis spatio conscripti sunt, in consilium adhibeantur; ut ex eorum non perfectione (id enim infinitum quiddam esset), sed degustatione, et observatione argumenti, styli, methodi, genius illius temporis literarius, veluti incantatione quadam, a mortuis evocetur. — BACON, *de Augm. Scient.*

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LITERATURE OF EUROPE

IN THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND  
SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

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PART III. (CONTINUED).

ON THE LITERATURE OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE  
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

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CHAPTER III.

HISTORY OF SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY, FROM 1600 TO 1650.

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SECTION I.

*Aristotelian Logic — Campanella — Theosophists — Lord Herbert of Cherbury —  
Gassendi's Remarks upon him.*

1. IN the two preceding periods, we have had occasion to excuse the heterogeneous character of the chapters that bear this title. The present is fully as much open to verbal criticism; and perhaps it is rather by excluding both moral and mathematical philosophy that we give it some sort of unity, than from a close connection in all the books that will come under our notice in the ensuing pages. But any tabular arrangement of literature, such as has often been attempted with no very satisfactory result, would be absolutely inappropriate to such a work as the present, which has already to labor with the inconvenience of more subdivisions than can be pleasing to the reader, and would interfere too continually with that general regard to chronology, without

Subjects  
of this  
chapter.

which the name of history seems incongruous. Hence the metaphysical inquiries, ~~that are conversant~~ with the human mind or with natural theology, the general principles of investigating truth, the comprehensive speculations of theoretical physics,—subjects very distinct, and not easily confounded by the most thoughtless,—must fall, with no more special distribution, within the contents of this chapter. But since, during the period which it embraces, men arose who have laid the foundations of a new philosophy, and thus have rendered it a great epoch in the intellectual history of mankind, we shall not very strictly, though without much deviation, follow a chronological order, and, after reviewing some of the less important laborers in speculative philosophy, come to the names of three who have most influenced posterity,—Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes.

2. We have seen in a former chapter how little progress had been made in this kind of philosophy during the sixteenth century. At its close, the schools of logic were divided, though by no means in equal proportion, between the Aristotelians and the Ramists: the one sustained by ancient renown; by civil or at least academical power, and by the common prejudice against innovation; the other deriving some strength from the love of novelty, and the prejudice against established authority, which the first age of the Reformation had generated, and which continued, perhaps, to preserve a certain influence in the second. But neither from one nor the other had philosophy, whether in material or intellectual physics, much to hope: the disputations of the schools might be technically correct; but so little regard was paid to objective truth, or at least so little pains taken to ascertain it, that no advance in real knowledge signalized either of these parties of dialecticians. According, indeed, to a writer of this age, strongly attached to the Aristotelian party, Ramus had turned all physical science into the domain of logic, and argued from words to things still more than his opponents.<sup>1</sup> Lord Bacon, in the bitterest language, casts on him a similar reproach.<sup>2</sup> It seems that he caused this branch of philosophy to retrograde rather than advance.

<sup>1</sup> Keckermann, *Præcognita Logica*, p. 129. This writer charges Ramus with plagiarism from Ludovicus Vives, placing the passages in apposition, so as to prove his case. Ramus, he says, never allicies

to Vives. He praises the former, however, for having attacked the scholastic party, being himself a genuine Aristotelian.

<sup>2</sup> "Ne vero, fili, cum hanc contra Aristotelem senectutem feceris, me cum rebell



3. It was obvious, at all events, that from the universities, or from the church, in any country, no improvement in philosophy was to be expected; yet those who had strayed from the beaten track, a Paracelsus, a Jordano Bruno, even a Telesio, had but lost themselves in irregular mysticism, or laid down theories of their own, as arbitrary and destitute of proof as those they endeavored to supersede. The ancient philosophers, and especially Aristotle, were, with all their errors and defects, far more genuine high-priests of nature than any moderns of the sixteenth century. But there was a better prospect at its close, in separate though very important branches of physical science. Gilbert, Kepler, Galileo, were laying the basis of a true philosophy; and they who do not properly belong to this chapter labored very effectually to put an end to all antiquated errors, and to check the reception of novel paradoxes.

No improvement till near the end of the century.

4. We may cast a glance, meantime, on those universities which still were so wise in their own conceit, and maintained a kind of reputation by the multitude of their disciples. Whatever has been said of the scholastic metaphysicians of the sixteenth century may be understood as being applicable to their successors during the present period. Their method was by no means extinct, though the books which contain it are forgotten. In all that part of Europe which acknowledged the authority of Rome, and in all the universities which were swayed by the orders of Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits, the metaphysics of the thirteenth century, the dialectics of the Peripatetic school, were still taught. If new books were written, as was frequently the case, they were written upon old systems. Brucker, who sometimes transcribes Morhof word for word, but frequently expands with so much more copiousness that he may be presumed to have had a direct acquaintance with many of the books he mentions, has gone most elaborately into this unpropitious subject.<sup>1</sup> The chairs of philosophy in Protestant

Methods of the universities.

ajus quodam nootico Petro Ranto con-  
cipere augurare. Nullum mihi com-  
mentum cum hoc ignorantia lallulo,  
periculisque literarum tinea, compen-  
ditum patre, qui cum methodi sue et  
compendii vinculis me torquet et premit,  
res quidem, et qua fuit, eliditur protinus  
et exilit: ipso vero arida et desertissi-  
mae argutæ tringit. Atque Aquinas qui-  
dam cum Secto et socia etiam in nou

rebus rerum varietatem effinxit, hic vero  
etiam in rebus non rerum solitudinem  
aquavit. Atque hoc hominis cum sit,  
humano tamen usus in ore habet impu-  
dens, ut mihi etiam pro [prin?] sophistis  
prevaricari videatur." — Bacon, De Inter-  
pretatione Naturæ.

<sup>1</sup> Morhof, vol. li. l. 1, c. 13, 14; Brucker,  
lv. cap. 2, 3.

German universities, except where the Ramists had got possession of them, which was not very common, especially after the first years of this period, were occupied by avowed Aristotelians; so that, if one should enumerate the professors of physics, metaphysics, logic, and ethics, down to the close of the century, he would be almost giving a list of strenuous adherents of that system.<sup>1</sup> One cause of this was the "Philippic method," or course of instruction in the philosophical books of Melancthon, more clear and elegant, and better arranged, than those of Aristotle himself or his commentators. But this, which long continued to prevail, was deemed by some too superficial, and tending to set aside the original authority. Brucker, however, admits, what seems at least to limit some of his expressions as to the prevalence of Peripateticism, that many reverted to the scholastic metaphysics, which raised its head about the beginning of the seventeenth century, even in the Protestant regions of Germany. The universities of Altdorf and Helmstadt were the chief nurseries of the genuine Peripateticism.<sup>2</sup>

5. Of the metaphysical writers whom the older philosophy brought forth we must speak with much ignorance. Scholastic writers. Suarez of Granada is justly celebrated for some of his other works; but of his *Metaphysical Disputations*, published at Mentz in 1614, in two folio volumes, and several times afterwards, I find no distinct character in Morhof or Brucker. They both, especially the former, have praised Lalemandet, a Franciscan, whose *Decisiones Philosophicæ*, on logic, physics, and metaphysics, appeared at Munich in 1644 and 1645. Lalemandet, says Morhof, has well stated the questions between the Nominalist and Realist parties; observing that the difference between them is like that of a man who casts up a sum of money by figures, and one who counts the coins themselves.<sup>3</sup> Vasquez, Tellez, and several more names, without going for the present below the middle of the century, may be found in the two writers quoted. Spain was peculiarly the nurse of these obsolete and unprofitable metaphysics.

6. The Aristotelian philosophy, unadulterated by the figments of the schoolmen, had eminent upholders in the Italian universities, especially in that of Padua. Cæsar Cremonini

<sup>1</sup> Brucker, iv. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, pp. 249-253.

<sup>3</sup> Morhof, vol. II. lib. I. cap. 14, sect. 15; Brucker, iv. 129.

taught in that famous city till his death in 1630. Fortunio Liceto, his successor, was as staunch a disciple of the Peripatetic sect. We have a more full account of these men from Gabriel Naudé, both in his recorded conversation, the *Naudæana*, and in a volume of letters, than from any other quarter. His twelfth letter, especially, enters into some detail as to the state of the University of Padua, to which, for the purpose of hearing Cremonini, he had repaired in 1625. He does not much extol its condition: only Cremonini and one more were deemed by him safe teachers; the rest were mostly of a common class; the lectures were too few, and the vacations too long. He observes, as one might at this day, the scanty population of the city compared with its size; the grass growing and the birds singing in the streets; and, what we should not find now to be the case, the "general custom of Italy, which keeps women perpetually locked up in their chambers, like birds in cages."<sup>1</sup> Naudé, in many of these letters, speaks in the most panegyric terms of Cremonini,<sup>2</sup> and particularly for his standing up almost alone in defence of the Aristotelian philosophy, when Telesio, Patrizi, Bruno, and others had been propounding theories of their own. Liceto, the successor of Cremonini, maintained, he afterwards informs us, with little support, the Peripatetic verity. It is probable, that, by this time, Galileo, a more powerful adversary than Patrizi or Telesio, had drawn away the students of physical philosophy from Aristotle; nor did Naudé himself long continue in the faith he had imbibed from Cremonini. He became the intimate friend of Gassendi, and embraced a better system without repugnance, though he still kept up his correspondence with Liceto.

7. Logic had never been more studied, according to a writer who has given a sort of history of the science about the beginning of this period, than in the preceding age; and in fact he enumerates above fifty treatises on the subject between the time of Ramus and his own.<sup>3</sup> The Ramists, though of little importance in Italy, in Spain, and even in France, had much influence in Germany, England, and Scotland.<sup>4</sup> None, however, of the logical works of the sixteenth century obtained such reputation as those by Smig-

<sup>1</sup> Naudé, *Epistole*, p. 52 (edit. 1667).

<sup>2</sup> P. 27, et *alibi sæpius*.

<sup>3</sup> Keckermann, *Præcognita Logica*, p. 110 (edit. 1695).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, p. 147.

lecius, Burgersdicius, and our countryman Crakanthorp, all of whom flourished, if we may use such a word for those who bore no flowers, in the earlier part of the next age. As these men were famous in their generation, we may presume that they at least wrote better than their predecessors. But it is time to leave so jejune a subject, though we may not yet be able to produce what is much more valuable.

8. The first name, in an opposite class, that we find in descending from the sixteenth century, is that of Campanella. Thomas Campanella, whose earliest writings belong to it. His philosophy, being wholly dogmatical, must be classed with that of the paradoxical innovators whom he followed and eclipsed. Campanella, a Dominican friar, and, like his master Telesio, a native of Cosenza, having been accused, it is uncertain how far with truth, of a conspiracy against the Spanish government of his country, underwent an imprisonment of twenty-seven years; during which, almost all his philosophical treatises were composed and given to the world. Ardent and rapid in his mind, and, as has just been seen, not destitute of leisure, he wrote on logic, physics, metaphysics, morals, politics, and grammar. Upon all these subjects, his aim seems to have been to recede as far as possible from Aristotle. He had early begun to distrust this guide, and had formed a noble resolution to study all schemes of philosophy, comparing them with their archetype, the world itself, that he might distinguish how much exactness was to be found in those several copies, as they ought to be, from one autograph of nature.<sup>1</sup>

9. Campanella borrowed his primary theorems from Telesio, but enlarged that Parmenidean philosophy by the inventions of his own fertile and imaginative genius.

He lays down the fundamental principle, that the perfectly wise and good Being has created certain signs and types (*statuas atque imagines*) of himself, all of which, severally as well as collectively, represent power, wisdom, and love, and the objects of these attributes, namely, existence, truth, and excellence, with more or less evidence. God first created space, the basis of existence, the primal substance, an immovable and incorporeal capacity of receiving body. Next he created matter without form or figure. In this cor-

His theory  
taken from  
Telesio.

<sup>1</sup> Cyprian Vita Campanellæ, p. 7.



poreal mass, God called to being two workmen, incorporeal themselves, but incapable of subsisting apart from body, the organs of no physical forms, but of their Maker alone. These are heat and cold, the active principles diffused through all things. They were enemies from the beginning, each striving to occupy all material substances itself; each therefore always contending with the other, while God foresaw the great good that their discord would produce.<sup>1</sup> The heavens, he says in another passage, were formed by heat out of attenuated matter, the earth by cold out of condensed matter: the sun, being a body of heat, as he rolls round the earth, attacks the colder substance, and converts part of it into air and vapor.<sup>2</sup> This last part of his theory Campanella must have afterwards changed in words, when he embraced the Copernican system.

10. He united to this physical theory another, not wholly original, but enforced in all his writings with singular confidence and pertinacity, the sensibility of all created beings. All things, he says, feel; else would the world be a chaos. For neither would fire tend upwards, nor stones downwards, nor waters to the sea; but every thing would remain where it was, were it not conscious that destruction awaits it by remaining amidst that which is contrary to itself, and that it can only be preserved by seeking that which is of a similar nature. Contrariety is necessary for the decay and reproduction of nature; but all things strive against their contraries, which they could not do if they did not perceive what is their contrary.<sup>3</sup> God, who is primal power, wisdom, and love, has bestowed on all things the power of existence, and so much wisdom and love as is necessary for their conser-

Notion of  
universal  
sensibility.

<sup>1</sup> "In hac corporea mole tantæ materia statum, dixit Deus, ut nascerentur fabri duo incorporei, sed non potentes nisi a corpore subsistere, nullarum physicarum formarum organa, sed formatorie tantummodo. Hic quoque nati calor et frigus, principia activa principella, idcirco sua virtute diffusa. Statim ininde fuerunt motus, dum uterque cupit totam substantiam materiam occupare. Illic contra se invicem pugnare ceperunt, providente Deo ex huiusmodi discordia ingens bonum." — *Philosophia Reale Epilogistica* (Frankfort, 1623), sect. 4.

<sup>2</sup> This is in the *Compendium de Rebus Naturæ* pro *Philosophia humana*, published by Adam in 1617. In his *Apology for*

Galileo, in 1622, Campanella defends the Copernican system, and says that the modern astronomers think they cannot construct good ephemerides without it.

<sup>3</sup> "Omnia ergo sentiunt; alias mundus esset chaos. Igne enim non visum tenderet, nec aquæ in mare, nec lapides deorsum; sed res omnia ubi primo repulsetur, permaneret, cum non sentiret aut destructionem inter contraria nec aut conservationem inter similia. Non esset in mundo generatio et corruptio nisi esset contrarietas, sicut omnes physiologi affirmant. At si alterum contrarium non sentiret alterum sibi esse contrarium, contra ipsum non pugnaret. Sentiant ergo singula." — *De Sensu Reum*, l. i. c. 6.

vation during that time only for which his providence has determined that they shall be. Heat, therefore, has power and sense, and desire of its own being; so have all other things seeking to be eternal like God: and in God they are eternal; for nothing dies before him, but is only changed.<sup>1</sup> Even to the world as a sentient being, the death of its parts is no evil, since the death of one is the birth of many. Bread that is swallowed dies to revive as blood, and blood dies that it may live again in our flesh and bones; and thus, as the life of man is compounded out of the deaths and lives of all his parts, so is it with the whole universe.<sup>2</sup> God said, Let all things feel, some more, some less, as they have more or less necessity to imitate my being; and let them desire to live in that which they understand to be good for them, lest my creation should come to nought.<sup>3</sup>

11. The strength of Campanella's genius lay in his imagination, which raises him sometimes to flights of impressive eloquence on this favorite theme. "The sky and stars are endowed with the keenest sensibility; nor is it unreasonable to suppose that they signify their mutual thoughts to each other by the transference of light, and that their sensibility is full of pleasure. The blessed spirits that inform such living and bright mansions behold all things in nature and in the divine ideas: they have also a more glorious light than their own, through which they are elevated to a supernatural beatific vision."<sup>4</sup> We can hardly

His imagination and eloquence.

<sup>1</sup> "Igitur ipse Deus, qui est prima potentia, prima sapientia, primus amor, largitus est robur omnibus potentiam vivendi, et sapientiam et amorem quantum sufficit conservationi ipsorum in tanto tempore necessario, quantum determinavit ejus mens pro rerum regularitate in ipso ente, nec præteriri potest. Calor ergo potest, sufficit, amat esse: ita et res omnis, cuique æternitati sicut Deus, et Deo res nulla moritur, sed solummodo mutatur," &c. — l. ii. c. 26.

<sup>2</sup> "Non est malus ignis in successe; terra autem malus videtur, non autem mundo: nec viperæ mala est, licet hominibus sit mala. Ita de omnibus idem prædico. Mors quoque rei unius æi nativitas est multarum rerum, mala non est. Moritur panis manducatus, ut fiet sanguis, et sanguis moritur, ut in carnem, nervos et ossa vertatur ac vivat: neque tamen hoc universo displicet animal, quævis partibus mors ipsa, hoc est, transmutatio dolorifica sit, displicetque.

Ita utilis est mundo transmutatio eorum particularium coxis displicensque illis. Totus homo compositus est ex morte ac vita partialibus, quæ integrant vitam humanam. Sic mundus totus ex mortibus ac vitibus compositus est, quæ totius vitam efficiunt." — *Philosop. Rerum*, c. 10.

<sup>3</sup> "Sentiant alia magis, alia minus, prout magis minusque opus habent, ut ne intendant in essendo. Ibi enim ament omnia vivere in proprio esse præcognito ut bono, ne corrumpi factura mea." — *Id.*, c. 10.

<sup>4</sup> "Anime beate habitantes de viis lucibusque mansiones, res intrinsecas vident omnes divitesque ideas, habent quoque lumen gloriosius quo elevarunt ad visionem supernaturalem beatificam, et veluti apud nos lucæ plurimæ sese mundo tangunt, interseant, decussant, sentiantque, ita in celo lucæ distinguuntur, ununtur, sentiunt." — *De Sensu Rerum*, l. iii. c. 4.

read this without recollecting the most sublime passage, perhaps, in Shakspeare:—

"St. Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick beset with patines of bright cold!  
There's not the smallest orb, which thou behold'st,  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim.  
Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But, while this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it."<sup>1</sup>

12. "The world is full of living spirits," he proceeds; "and, when the soul shall be delivered from this dark cavern, we shall behold their subtle essences. But now we cannot discern the forms of the air, and the winds as they rush by us; much less the angels and demons who people them. Miserable as we are, we recognize no other sensation than that which we observe in animals and plants, slow and half extinguished, and buried under a weight that oppresses it. We will not understand that all our actions and appetites and motions and powers flow from heaven. Look at the manner in which light is diffused over the earth, penetrating every part of it with endless variety of operation, which we must believe that it does not perform without exquisite pleasure."<sup>2</sup> And hence there is no vacuum in nature, except by violent means; since all bodies delight in mutual contact, and the world no more desires to be rent in its parts than an animal.

13. It is almost a descent in Campanella from these visions of the separate sensibility of nature in each particle, when he seizes hold of some physical fact or analogy to establish a subordinate and less paradoxical part of his theory. He was much pleased with Gilbert's treatise on the magnet, and thought it, of course, a proof of the animation of the earth. The world is an animal, he says, sentient as a whole, and enjoying life in all its parts.<sup>3</sup> It is not surprising that he

<sup>1</sup> Merchant of Venice, act v.

<sup>2</sup> "Protervolut in conspectu nostro venti et aer, at ad illi eos vicinus, multo minus videndus Angelos Demonasque, quorum plenus est mundus.

"Intellectus qui sensum alium nullum agnoscimus, nisi obtusum animalium plantarumque, tardum, demortuum, aggravatum, sepultum: nec quidem intelligere volumus omnem actionem nostram et appetitum et sensum et motum et vim a cælis manare. Ecce lux quanto acutius expanditur sensui super terram, quo multiplicatur, generatur, amplificatur, id-

que non sine magna efficere voluptate extimamus est." — l. iii. c. 5.

Campanella used to hear, as he tells us, whenever any evil was impending, a voice calling him by his name, sometimes with other words: he doubted whether this were his proper demon, or the air itself speaking. It is not wonderful that his imagination was affected by length of confinement.

<sup>3</sup> "Mundum esse animal, totum sentiens, omnesque portiones ejus communem dare vitam." — l. i. c. 9.

ascribes intelligence to plants; but he here remarks, that we find the male and female sexes in them, and that the latter cannot fructify without the former. This is manifest in siliquose plants and in palms (which on this account he calls in another place the wiser plants, *plantæ sapientiores*), in which the two kinds incline towards each other for the purpose of fructification.<sup>1</sup>

14. Campanella, when he uttered from his Neapolitan prison these dulcet sounds of fantasy, had the advantage of finding a pious disciple who spread them over other parts of Europe. This was Tobias Adami, initiated, as he tells us, in the same mysteries as himself (*nostræ philosophiæ symmysta*), who dedicated to the philosophers of Germany his own *Prodromus Philosophiæ Instaurandæ*, prefixed to his edition of Campanella's *Compendium de Rerum Natura*, published at Frankfort in 1617. Most of the other writings of the master seem to have preceded this edition; for Adami enumerates them in his *Prodromus*.<sup>2</sup> Campanella did not fully obtain his liberty till 1629, and died some years afterwards in France, where he had experienced the kindness of Peiresc and the patronage of Richelieu. His philosophy made no very deep impression: it was too fanciful, too arbitrary, too much tinctured with marks of an imagination rendered morbid by solitude, to gain many proselytes in an age that was advancing in severe science. Gassendi, whose good nature led him to receive Campanella, oppressed by poverty and ill usage, with every courteous attention, was, of all men, the last to be seduced by his theories. No one, probably, since Campanella, aspiring to be reckoned among philosophers, has ventured to assert so much on matters of high speculative importance, and to prove so little. Yet he seems worthy of the notice we have taken of him, if it were only as the last of the mere dogmatists in philosophy. He is doubtless much superior to Jordano Bruno, and I should presume, except in mathematics, to Cardan.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Inveniemus in plantis sexum masculinum et femininum, ut in animalibus, et feminam non fructificare sine masculi congressu. Hoc patet in siliquis et in palmis: quarum mas feminaque inclinatur mutuo alter in alterum et sese oculantur, et femina impregnatur, nec fructificat sine mas: immo conspicitur dolens, aqua illa mortuæque, et pulvere illius et odore reviviscit."

<sup>2</sup> [*Prodromus Philosophiæ Instaurandæ* is only a titlepage. Adami contributed a preface to this edition of Campanella's work; but the words *Prodromus*, &c., are meant for the latter, and not for any thing written by the editor. See *Notes and Queries*, vol. iv. p. 275. — 1863.]

<sup>3</sup> Brucker (vol. v. pp. 106-144) has given a laborious analysis of the philosophy of Campanella.



15. A less important adversary of the established theory in physics was Sebastian Basson, in his "*Philosophiæ Naturalis adversus Aristotelem Libri XII.*, in quibus abstrusa veterum physiologia restauratur, et Aristotelis errores solidis rationibus refelluntur. Genevæ, 1621." This book shows great animosity against Aristotle, to whom, what Lord Bacon has himself insinuated, he allows only the credit of having preserved fragments of the older philosophers, like pearls in mud. It is difficult to give an account of this long work. In some places we perceive signs of a just philosophy; but in general his explanations of physical phenomena seem as bad as those of his opponents; and he displays no acquaintance with the writings and the discoveries of his great contemporaries. We find also some geometrical paradoxes; and, in treating of astronomy, he writes as if he had never heard of the Copernican system.

16. Claude Berigard, born at Moulins, became professor of natural philosophy at Pisa and Padua. In his *Circuli Pisani*, published in 1643, he attempted to revive, as it is commonly said, the Ionic or corpuscular philosophy of Anaxagoras, in opposition to the Aristotelian. The book is rare; but Brucker, who had seen it, seems to have satisfactorily repelled the charge of atheism, brought by some against Berigard.<sup>1</sup> Another Frenchman domiciled in Italy, Magnen, trod nearly the same path as Berigard; professing, however, to follow the modification of the corpuscular theory introduced by Democritus.<sup>2</sup> It seems to be observable as to these writers, Basson and the others, that coming with no sufficient knowledge of what had recently been discovered in mathematical and experimental science, and following the bad methods of the universities, even when they deviated from their usual doctrines, dogmatizing and asserting when they should have proved, arguing synthetically from axioms and never ascending from particular facts, they could do little good to philosophy, except by contributing, so far as they might be said to have had any influence, to shake the authority of Aristotle.

17. This authority, which at least required but the defer-

<sup>1</sup> Brucker, iv. 400; Nicéron, xxxi., where he is inserted by the name of Beauregard, which is probably more correct, but almost usage.

<sup>2</sup> Brucker (p. 504) thinks that Magnen

misunderstood the atomic theory of Democritus, and substituted one quite different to his Democritus Reviviscens, published in 1640.

ence of modest reason to one of the greatest of mankind, was ill exchanged, in any part of science, for the unintelligible dreams of the school of Paracelsus, which had many disciples in Germany, and a very few in England. Germany, indeed, has been the native soil of mysticism in Europe. The tendency to reflex observation of the mind, characteristic of that people, has exempted them from much gross error, and given them insight into many depths of truth, but at the expense of some confusion, some liability to self-deceit, and to some want of strictness in metaphysical reasoning. It was accompanied by a profound sense of the presence of Deity; yet one which, acting on their thoughtful spirits, became rather an impression than an intellectual judgment, and settled into a mysterious indefinite theopathy, when it did not even evaporate in Pantheism.

18. The founder, perhaps, of this sect, was Tauler of Strasburg, in the fourteenth century, whose sermons in the native language — which, however, are supposed to have been translated from Latin — are full of what many have called by the vague word mysticism, — an intense aspiration for the union of the soul with God. An anonymous work generally entitled the German Theology, written in the fifteenth century, pursues the same track of devotional thought. It was a favorite book with Luther, and was translated into Latin by Castalio.<sup>1</sup> These, indeed, are to be considered chiefly as theological; but the study of them led readily to a state of mental emotion, wherein a dogmatic pseudo-philosophy, like that of Paracelsus, abounding with assertions that imposed on the imagination, and appealing frequently both to scriptural authority and the evidence of inward light, was sure to be favorably received. The mystics, therefore, and the theosophists, belonged to the same class; and it is not uncommon to use the names indifferently.

19. It may appear not here required to dwell on a subject scarcely falling under any province of literary history; but two writers within this period have been sufficiently distinguished to deserve mention. One of these was Robert Fludd, an English physician, who died in 1637; a man of indefatigable diligence in collecting the dreams and

<sup>1</sup> Episcopius places the author of the *Theologia Germanica*, with Henry Nicolas and David George, among mere enthusiasts.

follies of past ages, blending them in a portentous combination with new fancies of his own. The Rabbinical and Cabalistic authors, as well as the Paracelsists, the writers on magic, and whatever was most worthy to be rejected and forgotten, formed the basis of his creed. Among his numerous works, the most known was his *Mosaic Philosophy*, in which, like many before his time as well as since, he endeavored to build a scheme of physical philosophy on the first chapters in *Genesis*. I do not know whether he found there his two grand principles or forces of nature: a northern force of condensation, and a southern force of dilatation. These seem to be the *Parmenidean* cold and heat, expressed in a jargon affected in order to make dupes. In peopling the universe with demons, and in ascribing all phenomena to their invisible agency, he pursued the steps of *Agrippa* and *Paracelsus*, or rather of the whole school of fanatics and impostors called magical. He took also from older writers the doctrine of a constant analogy between universal nature, or the *macrocosm*, and that of man, or the *microcosm*; so that what was known in one might lead us to what was unknown in the other.<sup>1</sup> *Fludd* possessed, however, some acquaintance with science, especially in chemistry and mechanics; and his rhapsodies were so far from being universally condemned in his own age, that *Gassendi* thought it not unworthy of him to enter into a prolix confutation of the *Fluddian* philosophy.<sup>2</sup>

20. *Jacob Behmen*, or rather *Boehm*, a shoemaker of *Gorlitz*, is far more generally familiar to our ears than *Jacob Behmen*. His contemporary *Fludd*. He was, however, much inferior to him in reading, and in fact seems to have read little but the Bible and the writings of *Paracelsus*. He recounts the visions and ecstasies during which a supernatural illumination had been conveyed to him. It came, indeed, without the gift of transferring the light to others; for scarce any have been able to pierce the clouds in which his meaning has been charitably presumed to lie hid. The chief work of *Behmen* is his *Aurora*, written about 1612, and containing a record of the visions wherein the mysteries of nature were

<sup>1</sup> This was a favorite doctrine of *Paracelsus*. *Campanella* was much too fanciful not to embrace it. "*Mundus*," he says, "*habet spiritum qui est cælum, et ætærum corpus quod est terra, angularem*

*qui est mare. Homo igitur compendium epilogusque mundi est.*" — *De Sensu Re- rum*, l. ii. c. 32.

<sup>2</sup> *Brucker*, iv. 601; *Buhle*, iii. 167.

revealed to him. It was not published till 1641. He is said to have been a man of great goodness of heart, which his writings display; but, in literature, this cannot give a sanction to the incoherencies of madness. His language, as far as I have seen any extracts from his works, is colored with the phraseology of the alchemists and astrologers: as for his philosophy, so to style it, we find, according to Brucker, who has taken some pains with the subject, manifest traces of the system of emanation, so ancient and so attractive; and, from this and several other reasons, he is inclined to think the unlearned shoemaker of Gorlitz must have had assistance from men of more education in developing his visions.<sup>1</sup> But the emanative theory is one into which a mind absorbed in contemplation may very naturally fall. Behmen had his disciples, which such enthusiasts rarely want; and his name is sufficiently known to justify the mention of it even in philosophical history.

21. We come now to an English writer of a different class, little known as such at present, but who, without doing much for the advancement of metaphysical philosophy, had, at least, the merit of devoting to it, with a sincere and independent spirit, the leisure of high rank, and of a life not obscure in the world, — Lord Herbert of Cherbury. The principal work of this remarkable man is his Latin treatise, published in 1624, *On Truth as it is distinguished from Revelation, from Probability, from Possibility, and from Falsehood*. Its object is to inquire what are the sure means of discerning, and discovering truth. This, as, like other authors, he sets out by proclaiming, had been hitherto done by no one; and he treats both ancient and modern philosophers rather haughtily, as being men tied to particular opinions, from which they dare not depart. "It is not from an hypocritical or mercenary writer that we are to look for perfect truth. Their interest is not to lay aside their mask, or think for themselves. A liberal and independent author alone will do this."<sup>2</sup> So general an invective, after Lord Bacon, and indeed after others like Campanella, who could not be charged with following any conceits rather

<sup>1</sup> Brucker, iv. 608.

<sup>2</sup> "Non est agitur a larvato aliquo vel stipendiario scriptore ut verum consummatum operetur: Illorum apprimè in-

terest ne personam deponant, vel aliter quidem sentiant. Ingenius et aul arbitrii ista sollemniter præstabit auctor." — *Epist. ad Lectores.*



than their own, bespeaks either ignorance of philosophical literature, or a supercilious neglect of it.

22. Lord Herbert lays down seven primary axioms:—  
 1. Truth exists; 2. It is coeval with the things to which it relates; 3. It exists everywhere; 4. It is self-evident;<sup>1</sup> 5. There are as many truths as there are differences in things; 6. These differences are made known to us by our natural faculties; 7. There is a truth belonging to these truths,—“*Est veritas quædam harum veritatum.*”  
 This axiom he explains as obscurely as it is strangely expressed. All truth he then distinguishes into the truth of the thing or object, the truth of the appearance, the truth of the perception, and the truth of the understanding. The truth of the object is the inherent conformity of the object with itself, or that which makes every thing what it is.<sup>2</sup> The truth of appearance is the conditional conformity of the appearance with the object. The truth of perception is the conditional conformity of our senses (*facultates nostras prodromas*) with the appearances of things. The truth of understanding is the due conformity between the abovesaid conformities. All truth therefore is conformity; all conformity, relation. Three things are to be observed in every inquiry after truth,—the thing or object, the sense or faculty, and the laws or conditions by which its conformity or relation is determined. Lord Herbert is so obscure, partly by not thoroughly grasping his subject, partly by writing in Latin, partly perhaps by the *sphalmata et errata in typographo, quædam fortasse in seipso*, of which he complains at the end, that it has been necessary to omit several sentences as unintelligible; though what I have just given is far enough from being too clear.

23. Truth, he goes on to say, exists as to the object, or outward thing itself, when our faculties are capable of determining every thing concerning it; but, though this definition is exact, it is doubtful, he observes, whether any such truth exists in nature. The first condition of discerning truth in things is that they should have a relation to ourselves (*ut intra nostram stet analogiam*); since multitudes of things may exist which the senses cannot discover. The

<sup>1</sup> “*Hæc veritas est in se manifesta.*” He observes that what are called false appearances are true as such, though not true according to the reality of the object: “*Sua veritas apparentiæ falsæ inest,*

verò enim ita apparebit, vera tamen ex veritate rei non erit.”

<sup>2</sup> “*Inherens illa conformitas rei cum seipso, sive illa ratio, ex qua res unusquisque sibi constat.*”

three chief constituents of this condition seem to be, 1. That it should be of a proper size, neither immense nor too small; 2. That it should have its determining difference, or principle of individuation, to distinguish it from other things; 3. That it should be accommodated to some sense or perceptive faculty. These are the universally necessary conditions of truth (that is, of knowledge) as it regards the object. The truth of appearance depends on others, which are more particular; as that the object should be perceived for a sufficient time, through a proper medium, at a due distance, in a proper situation.<sup>1</sup> Truth of perception is conditional also; and its conditions are that the sense should be sound, and the attention directed towards it. Truth of understanding depends on the *notion universalis*, the common notions possessed by every man of sane mind, and implanted by nature. The understanding teaches us, by means of these, that infinity and eternity exist, though our senses cannot perceive them. The understanding deals also with universals; and truth is known as to universals, when the particulars are rightly apprehended.

24. Our faculties are as numerous as the differences of instinctive things; and thus it is, that the world corresponds by truth, perfect analogy to the human soul, degrees of perception being as much distinct from one another as different modes of it. All our powers may, however, be reduced to four heads; natural instinct, internal perception, external sensation, and reason. What is not known by one of these four means cannot be known at all. Instinctive truths are proved by universal consent. Here he comes to his general basis of religion, maintaining the existence of *notion universalis*, or common notions of mankind on that subject; principles against which no one can dispute, without violating the laws of his nature.<sup>2</sup> Natural instinct he defines to be an act of those faculties existing in every man of sane mind, by which the common notions as to the relations of things not perceived by the senses (*rerum internarum*), and especially such as tend to the conservation of the individual, of the species, and of the

<sup>1</sup> Lord Herbert defines appearance, "lecti pum, seu forma vicaria rei, quæ sub conditionibus lætis cum prototypo suo conformata, cum conceptu denique sub conditionibus etiam suis, conformari et modo quodam spiritali, tanquam ab objecto delecta, etiam in objecti absentia conservari potest."

<sup>2</sup> "Principia illa sacrosancta, contra quæ disputare nefas." — p. 44. I have translated this in the best sense I could give it; but to use *fais* or *nefas*, before we have defined their meaning, or proved their existence, is but indifferent logic.

whole, are formed without any process of reasoning. These common notions, though excited in us by the objects of sense, are not conveyed to us by them: they are implanted in us by nature; so that God seems to have imparted to us not only a part of his image, but of his wisdom.<sup>1</sup> And whatever is understood and perceived by all men alike deserves to be accounted one of these notions. Some of them are instinctive, others are deduced from such as are. The former are distinguishable by six marks, — priority, independence, universality, certainty, so that no man can doubt them without putting off, as it were, his nature; necessity, that is, usefulness for the preservation of man; lastly, intuitive apprehension, for these common notions do not require to be inferred.<sup>2</sup>

25. Internal perceptions denote the conformity of objects with those faculties existing in every man of sane mind, which, being developed by his natural instinct, are conversant with the internal relations of things in a secondary and particular manner, and by means of natural instinct.<sup>3</sup> By this ill-worled definition he probably intends to distinguish the general power, or instinctive knowledge, from its exercise and application in any instance. But I have found it very difficult to follow Lord Herbert. It is by means, he says, of these internal senses that we discern the nature of things in their intrinsic relations, or hidden types of being: and it is necessary well to distinguish the conforming faculty in the mind, or internal perception, from the bodily sense. The cloudiness of his expression increases as we proceed, and in many pages I cannot venture to translate or abridge it. The injudicious use of a language in which he did not write with facility, and which is not very well adapted, at the best, to metaphysical disquisition, has doubtless increased the perplexity into which he has thrown his readers.

26. In the conclusion of this treatise, Herbert lays down the five common notions of natural religion, implanted, as he conceives, in the breasts of all mankind. 1. That there is a God; 2. That he ought to be worshipped; 3. That virtue and piety are the chief parts of worship; 4. That we

<sup>1</sup> P. 43.

<sup>2</sup> P. 60.

<sup>3</sup> "Sensus interni sunt actus conformitatem objectorum cum facultatibus illis in omni homine sano et integro existentibus, quæ ab instinctu naturali expositæ,

circa analogiam rerum internarum, particulariter, secundario, et ratione instinctus naturalis versantur." — p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> "Circa analogiam rerum internarum, sive signaturæ et characteres rerum particulariores versantur." — p. 68.

are to repent, and turn from our sins; 5. That there are rewards and punishments in another life.<sup>1</sup> Nothing can be admitted in religion which contradicts these primary notions; but if any one has a revelation from heaven in addition to these, which may happen to him sleeping or waking, he should keep it to himself, since nothing can be of importance to the human race which is not established by the evidence of their common faculties. Nor can any thing be known to be revealed which is not revealed to ourselves; all else being tradition and historic testimony, which does not amount to knowledge. The specific difference of man from other animals, he makes, not reason, but the capacity of religion. It is a curious coincidence, that John Wesley has said something of the same kind.<sup>2</sup> It is also remarkable that we find in another work of Lord Herbert, *De Religione Gentilium*, which dwells again on his five articles of natural religion, essential, as he expressly lays it down, to salvation, the same illustration of the being of a Deity from the analogy of a watch or clock, which Paley has since employed. I believe that it occurs in an intermediate writer.<sup>3</sup>

27. Lord Herbert sent a copy of his treatise *De Veritate*, several years after its publication, to Gassendi. We have a letter to the noble author in the third volume of the works of that philosopher, showing, in the candid and sincere spirit natural to him, the objections that struck his mind in reading the book.<sup>4</sup> Gassendi observes that the distinctions of four kinds of truth are not new; the *veritas rei* of Lord Herbert being what is usually called

<sup>1</sup> P. 223.

<sup>2</sup> I have somewhere read a profound remark of Wesley, that, considering the sagacity which many animals display, we cannot fix upon reason as the distinction between them and man: the true difference is that we are formed to know God, and they are not.

<sup>3</sup> "Et quidem si horologium per diem et noctem integrum horns signanter indicans, viderit quipiam non mente captus, id consilio atque summa factum iudicaverit. Equis non planè Jemens, qui tunc mundi machinam non per viginti quatuor horns tantum, sed per tot sæcula circuitus suos obeuntem animadvertit, non id omne sapientissimo utique potentissimoque alicui auctori tribuat?"—*De Relig. Gentil.*, cap. xiii.

(The original idea, as has been rightly pointed out to me by M. Alphonse Bor-

ghers, the translator of this work, as well as of my *History of the Middle Ages*, is in *Cleero de Nat. Deorum*, li. 34. "Quod si in Scythiam aut in Britanniam, sphaeram aliquam tulerit hanc, quam nuper familiaris noster effecit Pseudonius, ejus singulis conversiones idem effluunt in sole, et in luna, et in quatuor stellis errantibus, quod effluunt in caelo singulis diebus et noctibus: quis in illa barbarie dubitet, quin ea sphaera sit perfecta ratio?" And, with respect to intermediate writers between Lord Herbert and Paley, I have been referred, by two other correspondents, to Hale's *Primitive Origination of Mankind*, where I had myself suspected it to be; and to Neuenstein's *Religious Philosopher* (English translation, 1780), p. xvi. of preface.—1842.]

<sup>4</sup> Gassendi Opera, iii. 411.



substance, his *veritas apparentiæ* no more than accident, and the other two being only sense and reason. Gassendi seems not wholly to approve, but gives as the best, a definition of truth little differing from Herbert's, the agreement of the cognizant intellect with the thing known: "*Intellectus cognoscentis cum re cognita congruentia.*" The obscurity of the treatise *De Veritate* could ill suit an understanding like that of Gassendi, always tending to acquire clear conceptions; and, though he writes with great civility, it is not without smartly opposing what he does not approve. The aim of Lord Herbert's work, he says, is that the intellect may pierce into the nature of things, knowing them as they are in themselves, without the fallacies of appearance and sense. But, for himself, he confesses that such knowledge he has always found above him, and that he is in darkness when he attempts to investigate the real nature of the least thing; making many of the observations on this which we read also in Locke. And he well says, that we have enough for our use in the accidents or appearances of things, without knowing their substances, in reply to Herbert, who had declared that we should be miserably deficient, if, while nature has given us senses to discern sounds and colors and such fleeting qualities of things, we had no sure road to internal, eternal, and necessary truths.<sup>1</sup> The universality of those innate principles, especially moral and religious, on which his correspondent had built so much, is doubted by Gassendi on the usual grounds, that many have denied or been ignorant of them. The letter is imperfect, some sheets of the autograph having been lost.

28. Too much space may seem to have been bestowed on a writer who cannot be ranked high among metaphysicians. But Lord Herbert was not only a distinguished name, but may claim the priority among those philosophers in England. If his treatise *De Veritate* is not, as an entire work, very successful, or founded always upon principles which have stood the test of severe reflection, it is still a monument of an original, independent thinker, without rhapsodies of imagination, without pedantic technicalities, and, above all, bearing witness to a sincere love of the truth he sought to apprehend. The

<sup>1</sup> "Miserè nobiscum actum esset, si ad percipiendos colores, sonos et qualitates externas cultus atque momentaneus sub- essent mediæ, nulla autem ad veritates illas internas, æternas, necessarias alio errore superasset via."

ambitious expectation that the real essences of things might be discovered, if it were truly his, as Gassendi seems to suppose, could not be warranted by any thing, at least, within the knowledge of that age. But, from some expressions of Herbert, I should infer that he did not think our faculties competent to solve the whole problem of *quiddity*, as the logicians called it, or the real nature of any thing, at least, objectively without us.<sup>1</sup> He is, indeed, so obscure, that I will not vouch for his entire consistency. It has been an additional motive to say as much as I have done concerning Lord Herbert, that I know not where any account of his treatise *De Veritate* will be found. Brucker is strangely silent about this writer, and Buhle has merely adverted to the letter of Gassendi. Descartes has spoken of Lord Herbert's book with much respect, though several of their leading principles were far from the same. It was translated into French in 1639, and this translation he found less difficult than the original.<sup>2</sup>

29. Gassendi himself ought, perhaps, to be counted wholly among the philosophers of this period; since many of his writings were published, and all may have been completed, within it. They are contained in six large folio volumes, rather closely printed. The *Exercitationes Paradoxiæ*, published in 1624, are the earliest. These contain an attack on the logic of Aristotle, the fortress that so many bold spirits were eager to assail. But, in more advanced life, Gassendi withdrew in great measure from this warfare; and his *Logie*, in the *Syntagma Philosophicum*, the record of his latest opinions, is chiefly modelled on the Aristotelian, with sufficient commendation of its author. In the study of ancient philosophy, however, Gassendi was impressed with an admiration of Epicurus. His physical theory, founded on corpuscles and a vacuum; his ethics, in their principle and precepts; his rules of logic, and guidance of the intellect,—

<sup>1</sup> "Cum facultates nostre ad analogiam propriam terminantur quidditates rerum latius non penetrant: Ideo quid res naturalis in seipsa sit, tali ex analogia ad nos ut sit constituta, perfectè sciri non potest."

— p. 165. In another place, he says it is doubtful whether any thing exist in nature, concerning which we have a complete knowledge. The eternal and necessary truths which Herbert contends for our knowing, seem to have been his *communes notitæ* subjectively understood, rather than such as relate to external objects.

<sup>2</sup> Descartes, vol. viii. pp. 138 and 168.

"J'y trouve plusieurs choses fort bonnes, et non publiées auparavant, car il y a peu de personnes qui soient capables d'en faire la métaphysique. Et pour le général du livre, il tient un chemin fort différent de celui que j'ai suivi. . . . Enfin, par conclusion, encore que je ne puisse m'accorder en tout aux sentimens de cet auteur, je ne laisse pas de l'estimer beaucoup au-dessus des esprits ordinaires."

seemed to the cool and independent mind of the French philosopher more worthy of regard than the opposite schemes prevailing in the schools, and not to be rejected on account of any discredit attached to the name. Combining with the Epicurean physics and ethics the religious element which had been unnecessarily discarded from the philosophy of the Garden, Gassendi displayed both in a form no longer obnoxious. The *Syntagma Philosophiæ Epicuri*, published in 1649, is an elaborate vindication of this system, which he had previously expounded in a commentary on the tenth book of *Diogenes Laertius*. He had already effaced the prejudices against Epicurus himself, whom he seems to have regarded with the affection of a disciple, in a biographical treatise on his life and moral character.

30. Gassendi died in 1656: the *Syntagma Philosophicum*, his greatest as well as last work, in which it is natural to seek the whole scheme of his philosophy, was published by his friend Sorbière in 1658. We may therefore properly defer the consideration of his metaphysical writings to the next period; but the controversy in which he was involved with Descartes will render it necessary to bring his name forward again before the close of this chapter.

His chief  
works after  
1650.

## SECTION II.

### On the Philosophy of Lord Bacon.

31. It may be judged from what has been said in a former chapter, as well as in our last pages, that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the higher philosophy, which is concerned with general truth and the means of knowing it, had been little benefited by the labors of any modern inquirer. It was become, indeed, no strange thing, at least out of the air of a college, to question the authority of Aristotle: but his disciples pointed with scorn at the endeavors which had as yet been made to supplant it, and asked whether the wisdom so long revered was to be set aside for the fanatical reveries of Paracelsus, the unin-

Preparation  
for the phil-  
osophy of

telligible chimeras of Bruno, or the more plausible but arbitrary hypotheses of Telesio.

32. Francis Bacon was born in 1561.<sup>1</sup> He came to years of manhood at the time when England was rapidly emerging from ignorance and obsolete methods of study, in an age of powerful minds, full himself of ambition, confidence, and energy. If we think on the public history of Bacon, even during the least public portion of it, philosophy must appear to have been but his amusement: it was by his hours of leisure, by time hardly missed from the laborious study and practice of the law and from the assiduities of a courtier's life, that he became the father of modern science. This union of an active with a reflecting life had been the boast of some ancients, — of Cicero and Antonine; but what comparison, in depth and originality, between their philosophy and that of Bacon?

33. This wonderful man, in sweeping round the champaign of universal science with his powerful genius, found as little to praise in the recent as in the ancient methods of investigating truth. He liked as little the empirical presumption of drawing conclusions from a partial experience as the sophistical dogmatism which relied on unwarranted axioms and verbal chicanery. All, he thought, was to be constructed anew; the investigation of facts, their arrangement for the purposes of inquiry, the process of eliciting from them the required truth. And for this he saw, that, above all, a thorough purgation of the mind itself would be necessary, by pointing out its familiar errors, their sources and their remedies.

34. It is not exactly known at what age Bacon first conceived the scheme of a comprehensive philosophy; but it was, by his own account, very early in life.<sup>2</sup> Such noble ideas are most congenial to the sanguine spirit of

<sup>1</sup> Those who place Lord Bacon's birth in 1560, as Mr. Montagu has done, must be understood to follow the old style, which creates some confusion. He was born the 22d of January, and died the 9th of April, 1626, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, as we are told in his Life by Hawley, the best authority we have.

<sup>2</sup> In a letter to Father Fulgentio, which bears no date in print, but must have been written about 1624, he refers to a juvenile work about forty years before, which he had confidently entitled *The*

*Greatest Birth of Time*. Bacon says: "Equidem memini me quadraginta abhinc annis juvenile opusculum circa has res confectis, quod magna prorsus fiducia et magnifico titulo, — 'Temporis Partum maximum' inscripsi." The apparent vain glory of this title is somewhat extenuated by the sense he gave to the phrase, "Birth of Time." He meant that the lapse of time and long experiences were the natural sources of a better philosophy, as he says in his dedication of the *Instauratio Magna*: "Ipse certe, ut ingenue fateor, solus anti-

youth, and to its ignorance of the extent of labor it undertakes. In the dedication of the *Novum Organum* to James, in 1620, he says that he had been about some such work near thirty years, "so as I made no haste." "And the reason," he adds, "why I have published it now, specially being imperfect, is, to speak plainly, because I number my days, and would have it saved. There is another reason of my so doing, which is to try whether I can get help in one intended part of this work; namely, the compiling of a natural and experimental history, which must be the main foundation of a true and active philosophy." He may be presumed at least to have made a very considerable progress in his undertaking before the close of the sixteenth century. But it was first promulgated to the world by the publication of his *Troa-tise on the Advancement of Learning* in 1605. In this, indeed, the whole of the Baconian philosophy may be said to be implicitly contained, except, perhaps, the second book of the *Novum Organum*. In 1623, he published his more celebrated Latin translation of this work, if it is not rather to be deemed a new one, entitled *De Augmentis Scientiarum*. I find,

mare hoc opus magis pro partu temporis quam ingenii. Illud enim in eo volumine mirabile est, initia rei, et tantas de his que invenerunt suspensiones, alieni in mentem venire potuisse. Cetera non illibenter sequuntur."

No treatise with this precise title appears. But we find prefixed to some of the short pieces a general title, *Temporis Partis Mirandus*, or *Instauratio Magna Imperii Universi in Humanum*. These treatises, however, though earlier than his great works, cannot be referred to so justly as a period as his letter to Fulgentio Mintonius; and I should rather incline to suspect that the *opusculum* to which he there refers has not been preserved. Mr. Montagu is of a different opinion. See his Note I. to the *Life of Bacon* in vol. xvi. of his edition. The Latin tract, *De Interpretatione Naturæ*, Mr. M. supposes to be the germ of the *Instauratio*, as the *Cogitata et Visæ* are of the *Novum Organum*. I do not dissent from this; but the former bears marks of having been written after Bacon had been immersed in active life. The most probable conjecture appears to be that he very early perceived the immensity and imperfection of the academical course of philosophy, and of all others which fell in his way, and formed the scheme of affording something better from his own resources; but that he did not

commit much to paper, nor had planned his own method till after he was turned of thirty, which his letter to the king intimates.

In a recent and very brilliant sketch of the Baconian philosophy (Edinb. Review, July, 1837), the two leading principles that distinguish it throughout all its parts are justly denominated *utility* and *progress*. To do good to mankind, and do more and more good, are the ethics of its inductive method. We may only regret, that the ingenious author of this article has been hurried sometimes into the low and contracted view of the deodaful word *utility*, which regards rather the enjoyments of physical convenience, than the general well-being of the individual and the species. If Bacon looked more frequently to the former, it was because so large a portion of his writings relates to physical observation and experiment. But it was far enough from his design to set up physics in any sort of opposition to ethics, much less in a superior light. I dissent also from some of the observations in this article, lively as they are, which tend to depreciate the originality and importance of the Baconian methods. The reader may turn to a note on this subject by Dugald Stewart, at the end of the present section.



upon comparison, that more than two-thirds of this treatise are a version, with slight interpolation or omission, from the Advancement of Learning; the remainder being new matter.

35. The *Instauratio Magna* had been already published in 1620, while Lord Bacon was still chancellor. Fifteen years had elapsed since he gave to the world his *Advancement of Learning*,—the first-fruits of such astonishing vigor of philosophical genius, that, inconceivable as the completion of the scheme he had even then laid down in prospect for his new philosophy by any single effort must appear, we may be disappointed at the great deficiencies which this latter work exhibits, and which he was not destined to till up. But he had passed the interval in active life, and in dangerous paths; deserting, as in truth he had all along been prone enough to do, the "shady spaces of philosophy," as Milton calls them, for the court of a sovereign, who, with some real learning, was totally incapable of sounding the depths of Lord Bacon's mind, or even of estimating his genius.

36. The *Instauratio Magna*, dedicated to James, is divided, according to the magnificent groundplot of its author, into six parts. The first of these he entitles *Partitiones Scientiarum*, comprehending a general summary of that knowledge which mankind already possess; yet not merely treating this affirmatively, but taking special notice of whatever should seem deficient or imperfect; sometimes even supplying, by illustration or precept, these vacant spaces of science. This first part he declares to be wanting in the *Instauratio*. It has been chiefly supplied by the treatise *De Augmentis Scientiarum*; yet perhaps even that does not fully come up to the amplitude of his design.

37. The second part of the *Instauratio* was to be, as he expresses it, "the science of a better and more perfect use of reason in the investigation of things, and of the true aids of the understanding;" the new logic, or inductive method, in which what is eminently styled the Baconian philosophy consists. This, as far as he completed it, is known to all by the name of the *Novum Organum*. But he seems to have designed a fuller treatise in place of this; the aphorisms into which he has digested it being rather the heads or theses of chapters, at least in many

First part:  
*Partitiones  
Scientiarum.*

Second part:  
*Novum Or-  
ganum.*

places, that would have been farther expanded.<sup>1</sup> And it is still more important to observe, that he did not achieve the whole of his summary that he had promised; but, out of nine divisions of his method, we only possess the first, which he denominates *prærogativæ instantiarum*. Eight others, of exceeding importance to his logic, he has not touched at all, except to describe them by name, and to promise more. "We will speak," he says, "in the first place, of prerogative instances; secondly, of the aids of induction; thirdly, of the rectification of induction; fourthly, of varying the investigation according to the nature of the subject; fifthly, of prerogative natures (or objects), as to investigation, or the choice of what shall be first inquired into; sixthly, of the boundaries of inquiry, or the synoptical view of all natures in the world; seventhly, on the application of inquiry to practice, and what relates to man; eighthly, on the preparations (*parascervæ*) for inquiry; lastly, on the ascending and descending scale of axioms."<sup>2</sup> All these, after the first, are wanting, with the exception of a few slightly handled in separate parts of Bacon's writings; and the deficiency, which is so important, seems to have been sometimes overlooked by those who have written about the *Novum Organum*.

38. The third part of the *Instauratio Magna* was to comprise an entire natural history, diligently and scrupulously collected from experience of every kind; including under that name of natural history every thing wherein the art of man has been employed on natural substances, either for practice or experiment; no method of reasoning being sufficient to guide us to truth as to natural things, if they are not themselves clearly and exactly apprehended. It is unnecessary to observe, that very little of this immense chart of nature could be traced by the hand of Bacon, or in his time. His Centuries of Natural History, containing about one thousand observed facts and experiments, are a very slender contribution towards such a

Third part:  
Natural  
History.

<sup>1</sup> It is entitled by himself, *Partis secundæ Summa, digesta in Aphorismos*.

<sup>2</sup> "Præmissis itaque primo loco de prærogativis instantiarum; secundo, de adiumentis inductionis; tertio, de rectificatione inductionis; quarto, de variatione inquisitionis pro natura subjecti; quinto, de præparativis instantiarum quantum ad inquisitionem, sive de eo quod inquiren-

dum est prius et posterius; sexto, de terminis inquisitionis, sive de synoptico omnium naturarum in universo; septimo, de deductione ad praxin, sive de eo quod est in ordine ad hominem; octavo, de parascervis ad inquisitionem; postremo autem, de scala ascensoria et descensoria axiomaticum."—lib. ii. 22.

description of universal nature as he contemplated: these form no part of the *Instauratio Magna*, and had been compiled before. But he enumerates one hundred and thirty particular histories which ought to be drawn up for his great work. A few of these he has given in a sort of skeleton, as samples rather of the method of collecting facts, than of the facts themselves; namely, the History of Winds, of Life and Death, of Density and Rarity, of Sound and Hearing.

39. The fourth part, called *Scala Intellectus*, is also wanting, with the exception of a very few introductory pages. "By these tables," says Bacon, "we mean, not such examples as we subjoin to the several rules of our method, but types and models, which place before our eyes the entire process of the mind in the discovery of truth, selecting various and remarkable instances."<sup>1</sup> These he compares to the diagrams of geometry, by attending to which the steps of the demonstration become perspicuous. Though the great brevity of his language in this place renders it rather difficult to see clearly what he understood by these models, some light appears to be thrown on this passage by one in the treatise *De Augmentis*, where he enumerates among the desiderata of logic what he calls *traditio lampadis*, or a delivery of any science or particular truth according to the order wherein it was discovered.<sup>2</sup> "The methods of geometers," he there says, "have some resemblance to this art;" which is not, however, the case as to the synthetical geometry with which we are generally conversant. It is the history of analytical investigation; and many beautiful illustrations of it have been given since the days of Bacon in all subjects to which that method of inquiry has been applied.

<sup>1</sup> "Neque de his exemplis loquimur, quae singulis praeceptis ac regulis illustrandi gratia adijciuntur, hoc enim in secunda operis parte abunde praestitimus, sed plane typos intelligimus ac plasmata, quae universum mentis processum atque inventiendi continuam fabricam et ordinem in certis subjectis, itaque variis et insignibus tanquam sub oculos ponant. Etiam nobis vocit in mentem in mathematicis, nante machina, sequi demonstrationem faciliem et perspicuam; contra absque hac commoditate omnia videri involuta et quam eversa sunt subtiliora."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vi. c. 2. "Scientia quae aliis tanquam tela pertexendo trahitur, eadem methodo, et fieri possit, animo alterius est insinuanda, qua primitus inventa est.

Atque hoc ipsum fieri sane potest in scientia per inductionem acquisita: sed in anticipata leta et prematura scientia, qua utimur, non facile dicat quis quo itinere ad eam quam nactus est scientiam pervenerit. Attamen sane secundum magis et minus possit quia scientiam propriam revivere, et vestigia sua cognitionibus simul et consensibus remitti: atque hoc facto scientiam sive transplantare in alium alienum, sicut crevit in suo. . . . Cujus quidem generis traditionis, methodus mathematicorum in eo subjecto similitudinem quandam habet." I do not well understand the words, *in eo subjecto*: he may possibly have referred to analytical processes.



40. In a fifth part of the *Instauratio Magna*, Bacon had designed to give a specimen of the new philosophy which he hoped to raise, after a due use of his natural history and inductive method, by way of anticipation or sample of the whole. He calls it *Prodromi, sive Anticipationes Philosophiæ Secundæ*. And some fragments of this part are published by the names *Cogitata et Visa, Cogitationes de Natura Rerum, Filum Labyrinthi*, and a few more; being as much, in all probability, as he had reduced to writing. In his own metaphor, it was to be like the payment of interest till the principal could be raised; "*tanquam fœnus reddatur, donec sors haberi possit.*" For he despaired of ever completing a work by a sixth and last portion, which was to display a perfect system of philosophy, deduced and confirmed by a legitimate, sober, and exact inquiry according to the method which he had invented and laid down. "To perfect this last part is above our powers and beyond our hopes. We may, as we trust, make no despicable beginnings: the destinies of the human race must complete it; in such a manner, perhaps, as men, looking only at the present, would not readily conceive. For upon this will depend not only a speculative good, but all the fortunes of mankind, and all their power." And, with an eloquent prayer that his exertions may be rendered effectual to the attainment of truth and happiness, this introductory chapter of the *Instauratio*, which announces the distribution of its portions, concludes. Such was the temple, of which Bacon saw in vision before him the stately front and decorated pediments, in all their breadth of light, and harmony of proportion; while long vistas of receding columns, and glimpses of internal splendor, revealed a glory that it was not permitted him to comprehend. In the treatise *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, and in the *Novum Organum*, we have less, no doubt, than Lord Bacon, under different conditions of life, might have achieved: he might have been more emphatically the high-priest of nature, if he had not been the chancellor of James I.; but no one man could have filled up the vast outline which he alone, in that stage of the world, could have so boldly sketched.

41. The best order of studying the Baconian philosophy would be to read attentively the *Advancement of Learning*; next, to take the treatise *De Augmentis* comparing it all along

Fifth part:  
Anticipationes Philosophiæ.

Sixth part:  
Philosophiæ Secundæ.

with the former; and afterwards to proceed to the *Novum Organum*. A less degree of regard has usually been paid to the Centuries of Natural History, which are the least important of his writings, or even to the other philosophical fragments, some of which contain very excellent passages; yet such, in great measure, as will be found substantially in other parts of his works. The most remarkable are the *Cogitata et Visa*. It must be said, that one who thoroughly venerates Lord Bacon will not disdain his repetitions, which sometimes, by variations of phrase, throw light upon each other. It is generally supposed that the Latin works were translated from the original English by several assistants, among whom George Herbert and Hobbes have been named, under the author's superintendence.<sup>1</sup> The Latin style of these writings is singularly concise, energetic, and impressive, but frequently crabbed, uncouth, and obscure; so that we read with more admiration of the sense, than delight in the manner of delivering it. But Rawley, in his *Life of Bacon*, informs us that he had seen about twelve autographs of the *Novum Organum*, wrought up and improved year by year, till it reached the shape in which it was published; and he does not intimate that these were in English, unless the praise he immediately afterwards bestows on his English style may be thought to warrant that supposition.<sup>2</sup> I do not know that we have positive evidence as to any of the Latin works being translations from English, except the treatise *De Augmentis*.

42. The leading principles of the Baconian philosophy are contained in the *Advancement of Learning*. These are amplified, corrected, illustrated, and developed in the treatise *De Augmentis Scientiarum*; from the fifth book of which, with some help from other parts, is taken the first book of the *Novum Organum*, and even a part of the second. I use this

<sup>1</sup> The translation was made, as Archbishop Tenison informs us, "by Mr. Herbert and some others who were esteemed masters in the Roman eloquence."

<sup>2</sup> "Ipse reperi in archivis dominationis sue, autographa plus minus duodecim Organum Novi de anno in annum elaborati, et ad incudem revocati, et singulis annis, utriusque illius altitudo polli et castigati, donec in illud tandem corpus adoleverat, quoniam lucem editum fuit; sicut multa ex animalibus factus lambere consueverunt neque quo ad membrorum firmitudinem

eos perducant. In libris suis compendiosis verborum vigorem et perspicuitatem præcipue sectatur, non elegantiam aut concinnitatem sermonis, et inter scribendum aut dictandum sæpe interrogavit, num sensus ejus clare admodum et perspicue redditus esset? Quippe qui sciret æquum esse ut verba famularentur rebus, non res verba. Et si in stylum fortitan polliorem incidisset, siquidem apud nostrates eloqui Anglicani artifex habebat, id evenit, quia evitare arduum est erat."

language, because, though earlier in publication, I conceive that the *Novum Organum* was later in composition. All that very important part of this fifth book which relates to *Experientia Litterata*, or *Venatio Panis*, as he calls it, and contains excellent rules for conducting experiments in natural philosophy, is new, and does not appear in the *Advancement of Learning*, except by way of promise of what should be done in it. Nor is this, at least so fully and clearly, to be found in the *Novum Organum*. The second book of this latter treatise he professes not to anticipate. "*De Novo Organo silemus*," he says, "*neque de eo quicquam pralibamus*." This can only apply to the second book, which he considered as the real exposition of his method, after clearing away the fallacies which form the chief subject of the first. Yet what is said of *Topica particularis*, in this fifth book *De Augmentis* (illustrated by "articles of inquiry concerning gravity and levity"), goes entirely on the principles of the second book of the *Novum Organum*.

43. Let us now see what Lord Bacon's method really was. He has given it the name of induction, but carefully distinguishes it from what bore that name in the old logic; that is, an inference from a perfect enumeration of particulars to a general law of the whole. For such an enumeration, though of course conclusive, is rarely practicable in nature, where the particulars exceed our powers of numbering.<sup>1</sup> Nor, again, is the Baconian method

Nature of the Baconian induction.

<sup>1</sup> "*Inductio quæ præcedit per enumerationem simplicem, res puerilis est, et præcario concludit, et periculo exponitur ab instantia contradietoria, et plerumque remota, minus quam par est, et ex insensummodo quæ præsto sunt pronuntiat. At inductio quæ ad inventionem est demonstrationem scientiarum et artium est utilis, naturam separare debet, per repetitiones et exclusiones debitas: ne deinde post negativas tot quot sufficiunt, super affirmativas concludere; quod ad hoc factum non est, nec tentatum certe, nisi tantummodo a Platone, qui ad excludendas definitiones et ideas, hac certe forma inductiois aliquatenus utitur.*" — *Nov. Org.*, l. 116. In this passage, Bacon seems to imply that the enumeration of particulars in any induction is or may be imperfect. This is certainly the case in the plurality of physical inductions; but it does not appear that the logical writers looked upon this as the primary and legitimate sense. Induction was distinguished

into the complete and incomplete. "The word," says a very modern writer, "is perhaps unhappy, as indeed it is taken in several vague senses; but to abolish it is impossible. It is the Latin translation of *ἐπαγωγή*, which word is used by Aristotle as a counterpart to *συλλογισμός*. He seems to consider it in a perfect or dialectic, and in an imperfect or rhetorical sense. Thus, if a genus (G.) contained four species (A. B. C. D.), syllogism would argue, that what is true of G. is true of any one of the four; but perfect induction would reason, that what we can prove true of A. B. C. D. separately, we may properly state as true of G., the whole genus. This is evidently a formal argument, as demonstrative as syllogism. But the imperfect or rhetorical induction will perhaps enumerate three only of the species, and then draw the conclusion concerning G., which virtually includes the fourth; or, what is the same thing, will argue, that

to be confounded with the less complete form of the inductive process, namely, inferences from partial experience in similar

what is true of the three is to be believed true likewise of the fourth."—Newman's lectures on Logic, p. 78. (1837.) The same distinction between perfect and imperfect induction is made in the *Encyclopédie Française*, art. "Induction," and apparently on the authority of the ancients.

It may be observed, that this imperfect induction may be put in a regular logical form, and is only vicious in syllogistic reasoning when the conclusion asserts a higher probability than the premises. If, for example, we reason thus: Some serpents are venomous. — This unknown animal is a serpent. — Therefore this is venomous: we are guilty of an obvious paradoxism. If we infer only. This may be venomous, our reasoning is perfectly valid in itself, at least in the common apprehension of all mankind, except dialecticians, but not regular in form. The only means that I perceive of making it so, is to put it in some such phrase as the following: All unknown serpents are affected by a certain probability of being venomous: This animal, &c. It is not necessary, of course, that the probability should be capable of being estimated, provided we mentally conceive it to be no other in the conclusion than in the major term. In the best treatises on the strict or syllogistic method, as far as I have seen, there seems a deficiency in respect to *probable* conclusions, which may have arisen from the practice of taking instances from universal or necessary, rather than contingent truths, as well as from the contracted views of reasoning which the Aristotelian school have always inculcated. No sophisms are so frequent in practice as the concluding generally from a partial induction, or assuming (most commonly tacitly) by what Archbishop Whately calls "a kind of logical fiction," that a few individuals are "adequate samples or representations of the class they belong to." These sophisms cannot, in the present state of things, be practised largely in physical science or natural history; but, in reasonings on matter of fact, they are of incessant occurrence. The "logical fiction" may indeed frequently be employed, even on subjects unconnected with the physical laws of nature; but to know when this may be, and to what extent, is just that which, far more than any other skill, distinguishes what is called a good reasoner from a bad one.

[I permit this note to remain as in former editions; but it might have been more fully and more correctly expressed. The proper nature of induction has been treat-

ed within a few years by Sir William Hamilton (*Edinburgh Review*, vol. lvi.); by Archbishop Whately in his *Elements of Logic*; by the author of the article "Or-ganon" in the *Penny Cyclopædia*; by M. de Rémusat, *Essai de Philosophie*, vol. II. p. 405; by Dr. Whewell in the *History*, and again in the *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*; and by Mr. Mill, *System of Logic*, vol. I. p. 352. The apparently various opinions of these writers, though in some degree resolving themselves into differences of definition, deserve attention from the philosophical reader; but it would be rather too extraneous from the character of the present work to examine them. I will only observe, that what has been called perfect induction, or a complete enumeration of particulars, is as barren of new truth as the syllogism itself, to which indeed, though with some variety in the formal rules, it properly belongs. For if we have already enumerated all species of fish, and asserted them to be cold-blooded, we advance not a step by saying this again of a herring or a halibut. Mr. Mill, therefore, has well remarked, that "Induction is a process of inference: it proceeds from the known to the unknown; and any operation involving no inference, any process in which what seems the conclusion is no wider than the premises from which it is drawn, does not fall within the meaning of the term." — *System of Logic*, vol. I. p. 352. But this inference is only rendered logically conclusive, or satisfactory to the reason, as any thing more than a probable argument, by means of a generalization which assumes, on some extra-logical ground, such as the uniformity of physical laws, that the partial induction might have been rendered universal. If the conclusion contains more than the premises *imply*, it is manifestly fallacious. But that the inductive syllogism,  $\delta \epsilon \varsigma \epsilon \nu \alpha \gamma \omega \gamma \eta \varsigma \alpha \nu \delta \iota \sigma \tau \alpha \nu \alpha \iota \sigma \iota \varsigma$  (*Analyt. Prin.*, l. II. c. 23), can only lead in form, to probable conclusions, even though the enumeration should be complete, appears from its being in the third figure: though after a general principle is once established by induction, when we come to apply it in new cases, the process will be in the first. Archbishop Whately and Sir W. Hamilton only differ in appearance as to this, since they look to different periods of reasoning; one, in which experience is generalized by the assumption of something unproved; another, in which a particular case is shown to fall within the generalization. But the second is not the induction of Aristotle. What



circumstances; though this may be a very sufficient ground for practical, which is probable, knowledge. His own method rests on the same general principle, namely, the uniformity of the laws of nature, so that, in certain conditions of phenomena, the same effects or the same causes may be assumed; but it endeavors to establish these laws on a more exact and finer process of reasoning than partial experience can effect. For the recurrence of antecedents and consequents does not prove a necessary connection between them, unless we can exclude the presence of all other conditions which may determine the event. Long and continued experience of such a recurrence, indeed, raises a high probability of a necessary connection: but the aim of Bacon was to supersede experience in this sense, and to find a shorter road to the result; and for this his methods of exclusion are devised. As complete and accurate a collection of facts, connected with the subject of inquiry, as possible, is to be made out by means of that copious natural history which he contemplated, or from any other good sources. These are to be selected, compared, and scrutinized, according to the rules of natural interpretation delivered in the second book of the *Novum Organum*, or such others as he designed to add to them; and, if experiments are admissible, these are to be conducted according to the same rules. Experience and observation are the guides through the Baconian philosophy, which is the handmaid and interpreter of nature. When Lord Bacon seems to deery experience, which in certain passages he might be thought to do, it is the particular and empirical observation of individuals, from which many rash generalizations had been drawn, as opposed to that founded on an accurate natural history. Such hasty inferences he reckoned still more pernicious to true knowledge

this was, I find nowhere more neatly delivered than in an Arabic treatise on logic, published, with a translation, in the eighth volume of the *Asiatic Researches*.

"Induction is the process of collecting particulars for the purpose of establishing a general rule respecting the nature of the whole class. Induction is of two kinds: viz., perfect and imperfect. It is perfect induction when the general rule is obtained from an examination of all the parts. For example, all animals are either endowed with speech, or not endowed with speech. But those endowed and those not endowed are both sentient; therefore all animals are sentient. This is an example

of perfect induction, which produces certainty.

"It is imperfect induction when, a number of individuals of a class being overlooked or excluded, a general rule is thus established respecting the whole. For instance, if it should be assumed that all animals move the under-jaw in eating, because this is the case with man, horse, goat, and sheep, this would be an example of imperfect induction, which does not afford certainty, because it is possible that some animals may not move the under-jaw in eating, as it is reported of the crocodile." — p. 127. — 1547.]

than the sophistical methods of the current philosophy; and in a remarkable passage, after censuring this precipitancy of empirical conclusions in the chemists, and in Gilbert's Treatise on the Magnet, utters a prediction, that if ever mankind, excited by his counsels, should seriously betake themselves to seek the guidance of experience, instead of relying on the dogmatic schools of the sophists, the proneness of the human mind to snatch at general axioms would expose them to much risk of error from the theories of this superficial class of philosophers.<sup>1</sup>

44. The indignation, however, of Lord Bacon is more frequently directed against the predominant philosophy of his age, that of Aristotle and the schoolmen. Though he does justice to the great abilities of the former, and acknowledges the exact attention to facts displayed in his History of Animals, he deems him one of the most eminent adversaries to the only method that can guide us to the real laws of nature. The old Greek philosophers, Empedocles, Leucippus, Anaxagoras, and others of their age, who had been in the right track of investigation, stood much higher in the esteem of Bacon than their successors, Plato, Zeno, Aristotle, by whose lustre they had been so much superseded, that both their works have perished, and their tenets are with difficulty collected. These more distinguished leaders of the Grecian schools were in his eyes little else than disputatious professors (it must be remembered that he had in general only physical science in his view), who seemed to have it in common with children, "ut ad garriendum prompti sint, generare non possint;" so wordy and barren was their miscalled wisdom.

45. Those who object to the importance of Lord Bacon's precepts in philosophy, that mankind have practised many of them immemorially, are rather confirming their utility than taking off much from their originality, in any fair sense of that term. Every logical method is built on the common faculties of human nature, which have been exercised since the creation in discerning, better or worse, truth from falsehood, and inferring the unknown from the known. That men might have done this more correctly is manifest from the quantity of error into which, from want

<sup>1</sup> Nov. Organ., lib. i. c. 64. It may be doubted whether Bacon did full justice to Gilbert.

of reasoning well on what came before them, they have habitually fallen. In experimental philosophy, to which the more special rules of Lord Bacon are generally referred, there was a notorious want of that very process of reasoning which he has supplied. It is more than probable, indeed, that the great physical philosophers of the seventeenth century would have been led to employ some of his rules, had he never promulgated them; but I believe they had been little regarded in the earlier period of science.<sup>1</sup> It is also a very defective view of the Baconian method to look only at the experimental rules given in the *Novum Organum*. The preparatory steps of completely exhausting the natural history of the subject of inquiry by a patient and sagacious consideration of it in every light are at least of equal importance, and equally prominent in the inductive philosophy.

46. The first object of Lord Bacon's philosophical writings is to prove their own necessity, by giving an unfavorable impression as to the actual state of most Its objects sciences, in consequence of the prejudices of the human mind, and of the mistaken methods pursued in their cultivation. The second was to point out a better prospect for the future. One of these occupies the treatise *De Augmentis*, and the first book of the *Novum Organum*. The other, besides many anticipations in these, is partially detailed in the second book, and would have been more thoroughly developed in those remaining portions which the author did not complete. We shall now give a very short sketch of these two famous works, which comprise the greater part of the Baconian philosophy.

47. The *Advancement of Learning* is divided into two books only; the treatise *De Augmentis*, into nine. Sketch of the treatise De Augmentis. The first of these, in the latter, is introductory, and designed to remove prejudices against the search after truth, by indicating the causes which had hitherto obstructed it. In the second book, he lays down his celebrated partition of human learning into history, poetry, and philosophy, according to the faculties of the mind respectively concerned in them, — the memory, imagination, and reason. History History is natural or civil, under the latter of which ecclesiastical and literary histories are com-

<sup>1</sup> It has been remarked, that the famous experiment of Pascal on the barometer, by carrying it to a considerable elevation, was "a crucial instance, one of the first, if not the very first, on record in physics." — Herschel, p. 229.

prised. These again fall into regular subdivisions; all of which he treats in a summary manner, and points out the deficiencies which ought to be supplied in many departments

of history. Poetry succeeds in the last chapter of Poetry.

the same book; but by confining the name to fictitious narrative, except as to ornaments of style, which he refers to a different part of his subject, he much limited his views of that literature; even if it were true, as it certainly is not, that the imagination alone, in any ordinary use of the word, is the medium of poetical emotion. The word "emotion," indeed, is sufficient to show that Bacon should either have excluded poetry altogether from his enumeration of sciences and learning, or taken into consideration other faculties of the soul than those which are merely intellectual.

48. Stewart has praised with justice a short but beautiful paragraph concerning poetry (under which title may be comprehended all the various creations of the faculty of the imagination, at least as they are manifested by words), wherein Bacon "has exhausted every thing that philosophy and good sense have yet had to offer on the subject of what has since been called the *beau idéal*." The same eminent writer and ardent admirer of Bacon observes, that D'Alembert improved on the Baconian arrangement by classing the fine arts together with poetry. Injustice had been done to painting and music, especially the former, when, in the fourth book *De Augmentis*, they were counted as mere *artes voluptariæ*, subordinate to a sort of Epicurean gratification of the senses, and only somewhat more liberal than cookery or cosmetics.

49. In the third book, science having been divided into theological and philosophical, and the former, or what regards revealed religion, being postponed for the present, he lays it down that all philosophy relates to God, to nature, or to man. Under natural theology, as a sort of appendix, he reckons the science or theory of angels and superhuman spirits; a more favorite theme, especially as treated independently of revelation, in the ages that preceded Lord Bacon, than it has been since. Natural philosophy is speculative or practical; the former divided into physics, in a particular sense, and metaphysics: "one of which inquireth and handleth the material and efficient causes; the other handleth the formal and final causes."

fine passage on poetry.

Natural theology and metaphysics.



Hence physics, dealing with particular instances, and regarding only the effects produced, is precarious in its conclusions, and does not reach the stable principles of causation.

"*Limus ut hie durascit, et hinc ut cetera liquescit  
Uno eodemque igni.*"

Metaphysics, to which word he gave a sense as remote from that which it bore in the Aristotelian schools as from that in which it is commonly employed at present, had for its proper object the investigation of forms. It was "a generally received and inveterate opinion, that the inquisition of man is not competent to find out essential forms or true differences." "Forme inventio," he says in another place, "habetur pro desperata." The word *form* itself, being borrowed from the old philosophy, is not immediately intelligible to every reader. "In the Baconian sense," says Playfair, "form differs Form of bodies only from cause in being permanent, whereas we apply cause to that which exists in order of time." Form (*natura naturans*, as it was barbarously called) is the general law, or condition of existence, in any substance or quality (*natura naturata*), which is wherever its form is.<sup>1</sup> The conditions of a mathematical figure, prescribed in its definition, might in this sense be called its form, if it did not seem to be Lord Bacon's intention to confine the word to the laws of particular sensible existences. In modern philosophy, it might be defined to be that particular combination of forces which impresses a certain modification upon matter subjected to their influence.

50. To a knowledge of such forms, or laws of essence and existence, at least in a certain degree, it might be possible, in Bacon's sanguine estimation of his own Might some-  
times be in-  
quired into. logic, for man to attain. Not that we could hope to understand the forms of complex beings, which are almost infinite in variety, but the simple and primary natures, which are combined in them. "To inquire the form of a lion, of an oak, of gold, nay, of water, of air, is a vain pursuit; but to inquire the forms of sense, of voluntary motion, of vegetation, of colors, of gravity and levity, of density and tenuity, of heat, of cold, and all other natures and qualities, which, like

<sup>1</sup> "Licet enim in natura nihil vere existat præter corpora individua, essentia æternus pater individui ex lege, in doctrinis tamen illa ipsa lex, ejusque inquisitio, et inventio atque explicatio pro fundamento

est tam ad sciendum quam operandum. Eam autem legem ejusque paragraphos formarum nomine intelligimus: præsertim cum hoc vocabulum invaluenter et familiariter occurrat." — Nov. Org., li. 2

an alphabet, are not many, and of which the essences, upheld by matter, of all creatures do consist, — to inquire, I say, the true forms of these is that part of metaphysics which we now define off.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, in the words he soon afterwards uses, “of natural philosophy, the basis is natural history; the stage next the basis is physic; the stage next the vertical point is metaphysic. As for the vertical point, ‘Opus quod operatur Deus a principio usque ad finem,’ the summary law of nature, we know not whether man’s inquiry can attain unto it.”<sup>2</sup>

51. The second object of metaphysics, according to Lord Bacon’s notion of the world, was the investigation of final causes. It is well known that he has spoken of this in physics, with unguarded disparagement.<sup>3</sup> “Like a virgin consecrated to God, it bears nothing;” one of those witty conceits that sparkle over his writings, but will not bear a severe examination. It has been well remarked, that, almost at the moment he published this, one of the most important discoveries of his age, the circulation of the blood,

Final causes too much slighted.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Novum Organum* he seems to have gone a little beyond this, and to have hoped that the form itself of concrete things might be known. “Date autem nature formam, sive differentiam veram, sive naturam naturantem, sive fontem emanationis [ista enim vocabula habemus, quæ ad indicationem rei proxime accedunt], invenire opus et intentio est Humanæ Scientiæ.” — Lib. ii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Advancement of Learning, book ii. This sentence he has scarcely altered in the Latin.

<sup>3</sup> “Causa finalis tantum abest ut proeant, ut etiam scientias corrumpat, nisi in hominis actionibus.” — *Nov. Org.*, li. 2. It must be remembered that Bacon had good reason to deprecate the admixture of theological dogmas with philosophy, which had been, and has often since been, the absolute perversion of all legitimate reasoning in science. See what Stewart has said upon Lord Bacon’s objection to reasoning from final causes in *physics*. Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers, book iii. chap. li. sect. 4.

[It ought to be more remembered than sometimes it has been, that Bacon solely objects to the confusion of *final* with *efficient* causes, or, as some would say, with antecedent conditions. These alone he considered to fall within the province of physics. But, as a part of metaphysical theology, he gives the former here a place. Stewart has quoted at length the passage, which entirely vindicates Bacon from the charge of depreciating the argu-

ment in favor of theism from the structure of the world; a charge not uncommonly insinuated against him in the seventeenth century, but repeated lately with the most dogmatic violence by a powerful writer, Count de Maistre. *Examen de la Philos. de Bacon*, c. 13, *et alibi*. Bruxelles, 1838. This work, little known perhaps in England, is, from beginning to end, a violent attack upon the Baconian philosophy and its author, by a man of extraordinary vigor as a polemical writer, quick to discover any weak point, and powerful to throw upon it the light of a remarkably masculine and perspicuous style; second only perhaps in these respects to Bossuet, or rather only falling short of him in elegance of language; but, like him, a mere sworn soldier of one party, utterly destitute of an eclectic spirit in his own philosophy, or even of the power of appreciating with ordinary candor the diversities of opinion in others; repulsive, therefore, not only to all who have looked with reverence upon those whom he labors to degrade, but to all who abhor party-spirit in the research of truth; yet not unworthy to be read even by them, since he has many just criticisms, and many acute observations; such, however, as ought always to be tried by comparison with the text of Bacon, whom he may not designedly have misrepresented, but, having set out with the conviction that he was a charlatan and an atheist, he naturally is led to exhibit in no other light. — 1847.]

had rewarded the acuteness of Harvey in reasoning on the final cause of the valves in the veins.

52. Nature, or physical philosophy, according to Lord Bacon's partition, did not comprehend the human species. Whether this be not more consonant to popular language, adopted by preceding systems of philosophy, than to a strict and perspicuous arrangement, may by some be doubted; though a very respectable authority, that of Dugald Stewart, is opposed to including man in the province of physics. For it is surely strange to separate the physiology of the human body, as quite a science of another class, from that of inferior animals; and, if we place this part of our being under the department of physical philosophy, we shall soon be embarrassed by what Bacon has called the *doctrina de fœdere*, the science of the connection between the soul of man and his bodily frame,—a vast and interesting field, even yet very imperfectly explored.

Man not  
included  
by him in  
physics.

53. It has pleased, however, the author to follow his own arrangement. The fourth book relates to the constitution, bodily and mental, of mankind. In this book he has introduced several subdivisions, which, considered merely as such, do not always appear the most philosophical; but the pregnancy and acuteness of his observations under each head silence all criticism of this kind. This book has nearly doubled the extent of the corresponding pages in the *Advancement of Learning*. The doctrine as to the substance of the thinking principle having been very slightly touched, or rather passed over, with two curious disquisitions on divination and fascination, he advances, in four ensuing books, to the intellectual and moral faculties, and those sciences which immediately depend upon them. Logic and ethics are the grand divisions, correlative to the reason and the will of man. Logic, according to Lord Bacon, comprises the sciences of inventing, judging, retaining, and delivering the conceptions of the mind. We invent, that is, discover, new arts, or new arguments; we judge by induction or by syllogism; the memory is capable of being aided by artificial methods. All these processes of the mind are the subjects of several sciences, which it was the peculiar aim of Bacon, by his own logic, to place on solid foundations.

Man in  
body and  
mind.

Logic:

54. It is here to be remarked, that the sciences of logic and ethics, according to the partitions of Lord Bacon, are far more extensive than we are accustomed to consider them. Whatever concerned the human intellect came under the first; whatever related to the will, and affections of the mind, fell under the head of ethics. "*Logica de intellectu et ratione, ethica de voluntate appetitu et affectibus disserit; altera decreta, altera actiones progignit.*" But it has been usual to confine logic to the methods of guiding the understanding in the search for truth; and some, though, as it seems to me, in a manner not warranted by the best usage of philosophers,<sup>1</sup> have endeavored to exclude every thing but the syllogistic mode of reasoning from the logical province. Whether, again, the nature and operations of the human mind, in general, ought to be reckoned a part of physics, has already been mentioned as a disputable question.

55. The science of delivering our own thoughts to others, branching into grammar and rhetoric, and including poetry, so far as its proper vehicles — metre and diction — are concerned, occupies the sixth book. In all this he finds more desiderata, than, from the great attention paid to these subjects by the ancients, could have been expected. Thus his ingenious collection of antitheta, or commonplaces in rhetoric, though mentioned by Cicero as to the judicial species of eloquence, is first extended by Bacon himself, as he supposes, to deliberative or political orations. I do not, however, think it probable that this branch of topics could have been neglected by antiquity, though the writings relating to it may not have descended to us; nor can we by any means say there is nothing of the kind in Aristotle's Rhetoric. Whether the utility of these commonplaces, when collected in books, be very great, is another question. And a similar doubt might be suggested with respect to the elenchs, or refutations, of rhetorical sophisms, *colores boni et mali*, which he reports as equally deficient, though a commencement had been made by Aristotle.

56. In the seventh book, we come to ethical science. This he deems to have been insufficiently treated. He would have the different tempers and characters of mankind first considered; then their passions and affections

<sup>1</sup> "In altera philosophia pars, quæ est *quærendi* ac *disserendi*, quæ *λογικῆς* dicitur." — *Cic. de Fin.*, i. 14.

(neither of which, as he justly observes, find a place in the Ethics of Aristotle, though they are sometimes treated, not so appositely, in his Rhetoric); lastly, the methods of altering and affecting the will and appetite, such as custom, education, imitation, or society. "The main and primitive division of moral knowledge seemeth to be into the exemplar or platform of good, and the regiment or culture of the mind: the one describing the nature of good; the other presenting rules how to subdue, apply, and accommodate the will of man thereunto." This latter he also calls "the Georgics of the mind." He seems to place "the platform or essence of good" in seeking the good of the whole, rather than that of the individual, applying this to refute the ancient theories as to the *summum bonum*. But perhaps Bacon had not thoroughly disentangled this question, and confounds, as is not unusual, the *summum bonum*, or personal felicity, with the object of moral action, or *commune bonum*. He is right, however, in preferring, morally speaking, the active to the contemplative life against Aristotle and other philosophers. This part is translated in *De Augmentis*, with little variation, from the *Advancement of Learning*; as is also what follows on the Georgics, or culture, of the mind. The philosophy of civil life, as it relates both to the conduct of men in their mutual intercourse, which is peculiarly termed prudence, and to that higher prudence which is concerned with the administration of communities, fills up the chart of the Baconian ethics. In the eighth book, admirable reflections on the former of these subjects occur at almost every sentence. Many, perhaps most, of these will be found in the *Advancement of Learning*. But, in this, he had been, for a reason sufficiently obvious and almost avowed, cautiously silent upon the art of government, — the craft of his king. The motives for silence were still so powerful, that he treats, in the *De Augmentis*, only of two heads Politics. in political science: the methods of enlarging the boundaries of a state, which James I. could hardly resent as an interference with his own monopoly; and one of far more importance to the well-being of mankind, the principles of universal jurisprudence, or rather of universal legislation, according to which standard all laws ought to be framed. These he has sketched in ninety-seven aphorisms, or short rules, which, from the great experience of Bacon in the laws, as well as his



peculiar vocation towards that part of philosophy, deserve to be studied at this day. Upon such topics, the progressive and innovating spirit of his genius was less likely to be perceived; but he is here, as on all occasions, equally free from what he has happily called, in one of his essays, the "froward retention of custom," the prejudice of mankind, like that of perverse children, against what is advised to them for their real good, and what they cannot deny to be conducive to it.

**Theology.** This whole eighth book is pregnant with profound and original thinking. The ninth and last, which is short, glances only at some desiderata in theological science, and is chiefly remarkable as it displays a more liberal and catholic spirit than was often to be met with in a period signalized by bigotry and ecclesiastical pride. But as the abjuration of human authority is the first principle of Lord Bacon's philosophy, and the preparation for his logic, it was not expedient to say too much of its usefulness in theological pursuits.

57. At the conclusion of the whole, we may find a summary catalogue of the deficiencies, which, in the course of this ample review, Lord Bacon had found worthy of being supplied by patient and philosophical inquiry. Of these desiderata, few, I fear, have since been filled up, at least in a collective and systematic manner, according to his suggestions. Great materials, useful intimations, and even partial delineations, are certainly to be found, as to many of the rest, in the writings of those who have done honor to the last two centuries. But, with all our pride in modern science, very much even of what, in Bacon's time, was perceived to be wanting, remains for the diligence and sagacity of those who are yet to come.

58. The first book of the *Novum Organum*, if it is not better known than any other part of Bacon's philosophical writings, has at least furnished more of those striking passages which shine in quotation. It is written in detached aphorisms; the sentences, even where these aphorisms are longest, not flowing much into one another, so as to create a suspicion, that he had formed adversaria, to which he committed his thoughts as they arose. It is full of repetitions: and indeed this is so usual with Lord Bacon, that, whenever we find an acute reflection or brilliant analogy, it is more than an even chance that it will recur in

*Desiderata  
enumerated  
by him.*

*Novum  
Organum:  
first book.*



some other place. I have already observed that he has hinted the *Novum Organum* to be a digested summary of his method but not the entire system as he designed to develop it, even in that small portion which he has handled at all.

59. Of the splendid passages in the *Novum Organum* none are perhaps so remarkable as his celebrated division of fallacies; not such as the dialecticians had been accustomed to refute, depending upon equivocal words or faulty disposition of premises, but lying far deeper in the natural or incidental prejudices of the mind itself. These are four in number: *idola tribus*, to which, from certain common weaknesses of human nature, we are universally liable; *idola speciei*, which, from peculiar dispositions and circumstances of individuals, mislead them in different manners; *idola fori*, arising from the current usage of words, which represent things much otherwise than as they really are; and *idola theatri*, which false systems of philosophy and erroneous methods of reasoning have introduced. Hence, as the refracted ray gives us a false notion as to the place of the object whose image it transmits, so our own minds are a refracting medium to the objects of their own contemplation, and require all the aid of a well-directed philosophy either to rectify the perception, or to make allowances for its errors.

60. These *idola*, *eidola*, images, illusions, fallacies, or, as Lord Bacon calls them in the *Advancement of Learning*, false appearances, have been often named in English *idols* of the tribe, of the den, of the market-place. But it seems better, unless we retain the Latin name, to employ one of the synonymous terms given above. For the use of *idol* in this sense is little warranted by the practice of the language, nor is it found in Bacon himself: but it has misled a host of writers, whoever might be the first that applied it, even among such as are conversant with the *Novum Organum*. "Bacon proceeds," says Playfair, "to enumerate the causes of error; the *idola*, as he calls them, or false divinities, to which the mind had so long been accustomed to bow." And with a similar misapprehension of the meaning of the word, in speaking of the *idola speciei*, he says, "Besides the causes of error which are common to all mankind, each individual, according to Bacon, has his own dark cavern or den, into which the light is imperfectly admitted, and in the obscurity of which a wretched idol lurks, at whose shrine the truth is often sacri-

ficed."<sup>1</sup> Thus also Dr. Thomas Brown: "In the inmost sanctuaries of the mind were all the idols which he overthrew;" and a later author on the *Novum Organum* fancies that Bacon "strikingly, though in his usual quaint style, calls the prejudices that check the progress of the mind by the name of idols, because mankind are apt to pay homage to these, instead of regarding truth."<sup>2</sup> Thus, too, in the translation of the *Novum Organum*, published in Mr. Basil Montagu's edition, we find *idola* rendered by idols, without explanation. We may, in fact, say that this meaning has been almost universally given by later writers. By whom it was introduced I cannot determine. Cudworth, in a passage where he glances at Bacon, has said, "It is no *idol of the den*, to use that affected language." But, in the pedantic style of the seventeenth century, it is not impossible that idol may here have been put as a mere translation of the Greek *εἰδωλον*, and in the same general sense of an idea or intellectual image.<sup>3</sup> Although the popular sense would not be inapposite to the general purpose of Bacon in the first part of the *Novum Organum*, it cannot be reckoned so exact and philosophical an illustration of the sources of human error as the unfaithful image, the shadow of reality, seen through a refracting surface, or reflected from an unequal mirror, as in the Platonic hypothesis of the cave, wherein we are placed with our backs to the light, to which he seems to allude in his *idola speciei*.<sup>4</sup> And as this is also plainly the true meaning, as a comparison with the parallel passages in the *Advancement of Learning* demonstrates, there can be no pretence for continuing to employ a word which has served to mislead such men as Brown and Playfair.

<sup>1</sup> *Prollim. Dissertation to Encyclopædia.*

<sup>2</sup> Introduction to the *Novum Organum*, published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Even Stewart seems to have fallen into the same error.

<sup>3</sup> Willd. these idols of the den maintain their authority, the cultivation of the philosophical spirit is impossible; or rather it is in a renunciation of this idolatry that the philosophical spirit essentially consists." — *Dissertation, &c.* The observation is equally true, whatever sense we may give to *idol*.

<sup>4</sup> In Todd's edition of Johnson's Dictionary this sense is not mentioned. But in that of the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* we have these words: "An *idol* or image is also opposed to a reality; thus Lord Bacon (see the quotation from him)

speaks of idols or false appearances."

The quotation is from the translation of one of his short Latin tracts, which was not made by himself. It is, however, a proof that the word *idol* was once used in this sense.

<sup>4</sup> "Quisque ex phantasia suæ cellulis tanquam ex specu Platonis, philosophatur." — *Historia Naturalis*, in præfatione. Coleridge has some fine lines in allusion to this hypothesis in that magnificent effusion of his genius, the introduction to the second book of *Joan of Arc*, but withdrawn, after the first edition, from that poem; where he describes us as "placed with our backs to bright reality." I am not, however, certain that Bacon meant this precise analogy by his *idola speciei*. See *De Augmentis*, lib. v. c. 4.

61. In the second book of the *Novum Organum*, we come at length to the new logic, the interpretation of nature, as he calls it, or the rules for conducting inquiries in natural philosophy according to his inductive method. It is, as we have said, a fragment of his entire system, and is chiefly confined to the "prerogative instances,"<sup>1</sup> or phenomena which are to be selected, for various reasons, as most likely to aid our investigations of nature. Fifteen of these are used to guide the intellect, five to assist the senses, seven to correct the practice. This second book is written with more than usual want of perspicuity; and, though it is intrinsically the Baconian philosophy in a pre-eminent sense, I much doubt whether it is very extensively read, though far more so than it was fifty years since. Playfair, however, has given an excellent abstract of it in his Preliminary Dissertation to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, with abundant and judicious illustrations from modern science. Sir John Herschel, in his admirable Discourse on Natural Philosophy, has added a greater number from still more recent discoveries, and has also furnished such a luminous development of the difficulties of the *Novum Organum*, as had been vainly hoped in former times. The commentator of Bacon should be himself of an original genius in philosophy. These novel illustrations are the more useful, because Bacon himself, from defective knowledge of natural phenomena, and from what, though contrary to his precepts, his ardent fancy could not avoid, — a premature hastening to explain the essences of things instead of their proximate causes, — has frequently given erroneous examples. It is to be observed, on the other hand, that he often anticipates with marvellous sagacity the discoveries of posterity, and that his patient and acute analysis of the phenomena of heat has been deemed a model of his own inductive reasoning. "None," observes Playfair, "has done so much in such circumstances." He was even ignorant of some things that he might have known; he wanted every branch of mathematics; and placed in this remote corner of Europe, without many kindred minds to animate his zeal for physical science, seems hardly to have believed the discoveries of Galileo.

<sup>1</sup> The allusion to *prerogative instances* is not to the English word *prerogative*, as Sir John Herschel seems to suppose (Discourse on Natural Philosophy, p. 182), but to the *prerogativa centuria* in the Roman court, which being first

called, though by lot, was generally found, by some prejudice or superstition, to influence the rest, which seldom voted otherwise. It is rather a forced analogy, which is not uncommon with Bacon

62. It has happened to Lord Bacon, as it has to many other writers, that he has been extolled for qualities by no means characteristic of his mind. The first aphorism of the *Novum Organum*, so frequently quoted, "Man, the servant and interpreter of nature, performs and understands so much as he has collected concerning the order of nature by observation or reason, nor do his power or his knowledge extend farther," has seemed to bespeak an extreme sobriety of imagination, a willingness to acquiesce in registering the phenomena of nature without seeking a revelation of her secrets. And nothing is more true than that such was the cautious and patient course of inquiry prescribed by him to all the genuine disciples of his inductive method. But he was far from being one of those humble philosophers who would limit human science to the enumeration of particular facts. He had, on the contrary, vast hopes of the human intellect under the guidance of his new logic. The *latens schematicus*, or intrinsic configuration of bodies, the *latens processus ad formam*, or transitional operation through which they pass from one form, or condition of nature, to another, would one day, as he hoped, be brought to light; and this not, of course, by simple observation of the senses, nor even by assistance of instruments, concerning the utility of which he was rather sceptical, but by a rigorous application of exclusive and affirmative propositions to the actual phenomena by the inductive method. "It appears," says Playfair, "that Bacon placed the ultimate object of philosophy too high, and too much out of the reach of man, even when his exertions are most skilfully conducted. He seems to have thought, that by giving a proper direction to our researches, and carrying them on according to the inductive method, we should arrive at the knowledge of the essences of the powers and qualities residing in bodies; that we should, for instance, become acquainted with the essence of heat, of cold, of color, of transparency. The fact however is, that, in as far as science has yet advanced, no one essence has been discovered, either as to matter in general, or as to any of its more extensive modifications. We are yet in doubt whether heat is a peculiar motion of the minute parts of bodies, as Bacon himself conceived it to be, or something emitted or radiated from their surfaces, or, lastly, the vibrations of an elastic medium by which they are penetrated and surrounded."

63. It requires a very extensive survey of the actual dominion of science, and a great sagacity, to judge, even in the loosest manner, what is beyond the possible limits of human knowledge. Certainly, since the time when this passage was written by Playfair, more steps have been made towards realizing the sanguine anticipations of Bacon than in the two centuries that had elapsed since the publication of the *Novum Organum*. We do not yet know the real nature of heat; but few would pronounce it impossible or even unlikely that we may know it, in the same degree that we know other physical realities not immediately perceptible, before many years shall have expired. The atomic theory of Dalton, the laws of crystalline substances discovered by Haüy, the development of others still subtler by Mitscherlich, instead of exhibiting, as the older philosophy had done, the *idola rerum*, the sensible appearances of concrete substance, radiations from the internal glory, admit us, as it were, to stand within the vestibule of nature's temple, and to gaze on the very curtain of the shrine. If, indeed, we could know the internal structure of one primary atom, and could tell, not of course by immediate testimony of sense, but by legitimate inference from it, through what constant laws its component though indiscernible molecules, the atoms of atoms, attract, retain, and repel each other, we should have before our mental vision not only the *latens schematismus*, the real configuration of the substance, but its *form*, or efficient nature, and could give as perfect a definition of any such substance, of gold, for example, as we can of a cone or a parallelogram. The recent discoveries of animal and vegetable development, and especially the happy application of the microscope to observing chemical and organic changes in their actual course, are equally remarkable advances towards a knowledge of the *latens processus ad formam*, the corpuscular motions by which all change must be accomplished, and are in fact a great deal more than Bacon himself would have deemed possible.<sup>1</sup>

64. These astonishing revelations of natural mysteries, fresh tidings of which crowd in upon us every day, may be

<sup>1</sup> By the *latens processus*, he meant only what is the natural operation by which one form or condition of being is induced upon another. Thus, when the surface of iron becomes rusty, or when water is converted into steam, some change

has taken place, a *latent progress* from one form to another. This, in numberless cases, we can now answer, at least to a very great extent, by the science of chemistry.

Almost  
justified of  
late;



likely to overwhelm all sober hesitation as to the capacities of the human mind, and to bring back that confidence which Bacon, in so much less favorable circumstances, has ventured to feel. There seem, however, to be good reasons for keeping within bounds this expectation of future improvement, which, as it has sometimes been announced in unqualified phrases, is hardly more philosophical than the vulgar supposition that the capacities of mankind are almost stationary. The phenomena of nature, indeed, in all their possible combinations, are so infinite, in a popular sense of the word, that during no period to which the human species can be conceived to reach would they be entirely collected and registered. The case is still stronger as to the secret agencies and processes by means of which their phenomena are displayed. These have as yet, in no one instance, so far as I know, been fully ascertained. "Microscopes," says Herschel, "have been constructed which magnify more than one thousand times in linear dimension, so that the smallest visible grain of sand may be enlarged to the appearance of one million times more bulky; yet the only impression we receive by viewing it through such a magnifier is that it reminds us of some vast fragment of a rock; while the intimate structure on which depend its color, its hardness, and its chemical properties, remains still concealed: we do not seem to have made even an approach to a closer analysis of it by any such scrutiny."<sup>1</sup>

65. The instance here chosen is not the most favorable for the experimental philosopher. He might perhaps hope to gain more knowledge by applying the best microscope to a regular crystal or to an organized substance. But there is evidently a fundamental limitation of physical science, arising from those of the bodily senses and of muscular motions. The nicest instruments must be constructed and directed by the human hand; the range of the finest glasses must have a limit, not only in their own natural structure, but in that of the human eye. But no theory in science will be acknowledged to deserve any regard, except as it is drawn immediately, and by an exclusive process, from the phenomena which our senses report to us. Thus the regular observation of definite proportions in chemical combination has suggested the atomic theory; and

Limits to  
our know-  
ledge by  
senses.

<sup>1</sup> Discourse on Nat. Philos., p. 121

even this has been sceptically accepted by our cautious school of philosophy. If we are ever to go farther into the molecular analysis of substances, it must be through the means and upon the authority of new discoveries exhibited to our senses in experiment. But the existing powers of exhibiting or compelling nature by instruments, vast as they appear to us, and wonderful as has been their efficacy in many respects, have done little for many years past in diminishing the number of substances reputed to be simple; and with strong reasons to suspect that some of these, at least, yield to the crucible of nature, our electric batteries have, up to this hour, played innocuously round their heads.

66. Bacon has thrown out, once or twice, a hint at a single principle, a summary law of nature, as if all subordinate causes resolved themselves into one great process, according to which God works his will in the universe: "*Opus quod operatur Deus a principio usque ad finem.*" The natural tendency towards simplification, and what we consider as harmony, in our philosophical systems, which Lord Bacon himself reckons among the *idola tribus*, the fallacies incident to the species, has led some to favor this unity of physical law. Impact and gravity have each had their supporters. But we are as yet at a great distance from establishing such a generalization, nor does it appear by any means probable that it will ever assume any simple form.

67. The close connection of the inductive process recommended by Bacon with natural philosophy in the common sense of that word, and the general selection of his examples for illustration from that science, have given rise to a question, whether he comprehended metaphysical and moral philosophy within the scope of his inquiry.<sup>1</sup> That they formed a part of the Instauration of Sciences, and therefore of the Baconian philosophy in the fullest sense of the word, is obvious from the fact that a large proportion of the treatise *De Augmentis Scientiarum* is dedicated to those subjects; and it is not less so that the *idola* of the *Novum Organum* are at least as apt to deceive us in moral as in physical argument. The question, there-

Inductive  
logic :  
whether  
confined to  
physics.

<sup>1</sup> This question was discussed some years since by the late editor of the Edinburgh Review, on one side, and by Dugald Stewart on the other. See Edinburgh

Review, vol. iii. p. 273; and the Preliminary Dissertation to Stewart's Philosophical Essays.

fore, can only be raised as to the peculiar method of conducting investigations, which is considered as his own. This would, however, appear to have been decided by himself in very positive language: "It may be doubted, rather than objected, by some, whether we look to the perfection, by means of our method, of natural philosophy alone, or of the other sciences also, of logic, of ethics, of politics. But we certainly mean what has here been said to be understood as to them all; and as the ordinary logic, which proceeds by syllogism, does not relate to physical only, but to every other science, so ours, which proceeds by induction, comprises them all. For we as much collect a history and form tables concerning anger, fear, shame, and the like, and also concerning examples from civil life, and as much concerning the intellectual operations of memory, combination, and partition, judgment and the others, as concerning heat and cold, or light, or vegetation, or such things."<sup>1</sup> But he proceeds to intimate, as far as I understand the next sentence, that although his method or logic, strictly speaking, is applicable to other subjects, it is his immediate object to inquire into the properties of natural things, or what is generally meant by physics. To this, indeed, the second book of the *Novum Organum* and the portions that he completed of the remaining parts of the *Instauratio Magna* bear witness.

68. It by no means follows, because the leading principles of the inductive philosophy are applicable to other topics of inquiry than what is usually comprehended under the name of physics, that we can employ all the *prærogative instantiarum*, and still less the peculiar rules for conducting experiments which Bacon has given us, in moral or even psychological disquisi-

Baconian philosophy built on observation and experiment.

<sup>1</sup> "Etiam dubitabit quispiam potius quam objiciet, utrum nos de naturali tantum philosophia, an etiam de scientiis reliquis, logicis, ethicis, politicis, secundum viam nostram persequendi loquamur. At nos certe de universis hæc, quæ dicta sunt, intelligimus; atque quædammodum vulgaris logicæ, quæ regit res per syllogismum, non tantum ad naturales, sed ad omnes scientiis pertinet, ita et nostræ, quæ procedit per inductionem, omnia complectitur. Tam enim Historiam et Tabulas Inveniendi confabimus de ira, metu et verecundia et similibus, ac etiam de exemplis rerum civilium; nec minus de motibus mentalibus memoriæ, compo-

sitionis et divisionis, judicii et rationum, quàm de calido et frigido, aut luce, aut vegetatione aut similibus. Sed tamen cum nostræ ratio interpretandi, post historiam præparatam et ordinatam, non mentis tantum motus et discursus, ut logica vulgaris, sed et rerum naturam intuetur, ita mentem regimus ut ad rerum naturam se aptis per omnia modis applicare possit. Atque propterea multa et diversa in doctrina interpretationis præcipimus, quæ ad subject, de quo inquirimus, qualitatem et conditionem modum Inveniendi nonnulla ex parte applicant."—*Nov. Org.* l. 127.

tious. Many of them are plainly referable to particular manipulations, or at most to limited subjects of chemical theory. And the frequent occurrence of passages which show Lord Bacon's fondness for experimental processes, seems to have led some to consider his peculiar methods as more exclusively related to such modes of inquiry than they really are. But when the Baconian philosophy is said to be experimental, we are to remember that experiment is only better than what we may call passive observation, because it enlarges our capacity of observing with exactness and expedition. The reasoning is grounded on observation in both cases. In astronomy, where nature remarkably presents the objects of our observation without liability to error or uncertain delay, we may reason on the inductive principle as well as in sciences that require tentative operations. The inferences drawn from the difference of time in the occultation of the satellites of Jupiter at different seasons, in favor of the Copernican theory and against the instantaneous motion of light, are inductions of the same kind with any that could be derived from an *experimentum crucis*. They are exclusions of those hypotheses which might solve many phenomena, but fail to explain those immediately observed.

69. But astronomy, from the comparative solitariness, if we may so say, of all its phenomena, and the simplicity of their laws, has an advantage that is rarely found in sciences of mere observation. <sup>Advantages of the latter.</sup> Bacon justly gave to experiment, or the interrogation of nature, compelling her to give up her secrets, a decided preference whenever it can be employed; and it is unquestionably true that the inductive method is tedious, if not uncertain, when it cannot resort to so compendious a process. One of the subjects selected by Bacon in the third part of the *Instauratio* as specimens of the method by which an inquiry into nature should be conducted—the History of Winds—does not greatly admit of experiments; and the very slow progress of meteorology, which has yet hardly deserved the name of a science, when compared with that of chemistry or optics, will illustrate the difficulties of employing the inductive method without their aid. It is not, therefore, that Lord Bacon's method of philosophizing is properly experimental, but that by experiment it is most successfully displayed.

70. It will follow from hence, that in proportion as, in any



matter of inquiry, we can separate, in what we examine, the determining conditions, or law of form, from every thing extraneous, we shall be more able to use the Baconian method with advantage. In metaphysics, or what Stewart would have called the philosophy of the human mind, there seems much in its own nature capable of being subjected to the inductive reasoning. Such are those facts which, by their intimate connection with physiology, or the laws of the bodily frame, fall properly within the province of the physician. In these, though exact observation is chiefly required, it is often practicable to shorten its process by experiment. And another important illustration may be given from the education of children, considered as a science of rules deduced from observation; wherein also we are frequently more able to substitute experiment for mere experience, than with mankind in general, whom we may observe at a distance, but cannot control. In politics, as well as in moral prudence, we can seldom do more than this. It seems, however, practicable to apply the close attention enforced by Bacon, and the careful arrangement and comparison of phenomena, which are the basis of his induction, to these subjects. Thus, if the circumstances of all popular seditions recorded in history were to be carefully collected with great regard to the probability of evidence, and to any peculiarity that may have affected the results, it might be easy to perceive such a connection of antecedent and subsequent events in the great plurality of instances, as would reasonably lead us to form probable inferences as to similar tumults when they should occur. This has sometimes been done, with less universality, and with much less accuracy than the Baconian method requires, by such theoretical writers on politics as Machiavel and Bodin. But it has been apt to degenerate into pedantry, and to disappoint the practical statesman, who commonly rejects it with scorn; partly because civil history is itself defective, seldom giving a just view of events, and still less frequently of the motives of those concerned in them; partly because the history of mankind is far less copious than that of nature, and, in much that relates to politics, has not yet had time to furnish the ground-work of a sufficient induction; but partly also from some distinctive circumstances which affect our reasonings in moral far more than in physical science, and

Sometimes applicable to philosophy of human mind.

Less so to politics and morals.



which deserve to be considered, so far at least as to sketch the arguments that might be employed.

71. The Baconian logic, as has been already said, deduces universal principles from select observation; that is, from particular, and, in some cases of experiment, from singular instances. It may easily appear to one conversant with the syllogistic method less legitimate than the old induction, which proceeded by an exhaustive enumeration of particulars,<sup>1</sup> and at most warranting but a probable conclusion. The answer to this objection can only be found in the acknowledged uniformity of the laws of nature, so that whatever has once occurred will, under absolutely similar circumstances, always occur again. This may be called the suppressed premise of every Baconian enthymeme, every inference from observation of phenomena, which extends beyond the particular case. When it is once ascertained that water is composed of one proportion of oxygen to one of hydrogen, we never doubt but that such are its invariable constituents. We may repeat the experiment to secure ourselves against the risk of error in the operation, or of some unperceived condition that may have affected the result; but, when a sufficient number of trials has secured us against this, an invariable law of nature is inferred from the particular instance: nobody conceives that one pint of pure water can be of a different composition from another. All men, even the most rude, reason upon this primary maxim; but they reason inconclusively, from misapprehending the true relations of cause and effect in the phenomena to which they direct their attention. It is by the sagacity and ingenuity with which Bacon has excluded the various sources of error, and discerned the true cause, that his method is distinguished from that which the vulgar practise.

72. It is required, however, for the validity of this method, first, that there should be a strict uniformity in the general laws of nature, from which we can infer that what has been will, in the same conditions, be again; and, secondly, that we shall be able to perceive and estimate all the conditions with an entire and exclusive knowledge. The first is granted in all physical phenomena; but in those

Induction less conclusive in these subjects.

Reasoner for this difference.

<sup>1</sup> [This is not quite an accurate account of the old induction, which seldom proceeded to an exhaustive enumeration, but assumed a general truth from a particular one. — 1847.]

which we cannot submit to experiment, or investigate by some such method as Bacon has pointed out, we often find our philosophy at fault for want of the second. Such is at present the case with respect to many parts of chemistry; for example, that of organic substances, which we can analyze, but as yet can in very few instances recombine. We do not know, and, if we did know, could not probably command, the entire conditions of organic bodies (even structurally, not as living), — the *form*, as Bacon calls it, of blood or milk or oak-galls. But, in attempting to subject the actions of men to this inductive philosophy, we are arrested by the want of both the necessary requisitions. Matter can only be diverted from its obedience to unvarying laws by the control of mind; but we have to inquire whether mind is equally the passive instrument of any law. We have to open the great problem of human liberty, and must deny even a disturbing force to the will, before we can assume that all actions of mankind must, under given conditions, preserve the same necessary train of sequences as a molecule of matter. But, if this be answered affirmatively, we are still almost as far removed from a conclusive result as before. We cannot, without contradicting every-day experience, maintain that all men are determined alike by the same *outward* circumstances: we must have recourse to the differences of temperament, of physical constitution, of casual or habitual association. The former alone, however, are, at the best, subject to our observation, either at the time, or, as is most common, through testimony; of the latter, no being, which does not watch the movements of the soul itself, can reach more than a probable conjecture. Sylla resigned the dictatorship; therefore all men in the circumstances of Sylla will do the same, — is an argument false in one sense of the word "circumstances," and useless at least in any other. It is doubted by many, whether meteorology will ever be well understood, on account of the complexity of the forces concerned, and their remoteness from the apprehension of the senses. Do not the same difficulties apply to human affairs? And while we reflect on these difficulties, to which we must add those which spring from the scantiness of our means of observation, the defectiveness and falsehood of testimony, especially what is called historical, and a thousand other errors to which the various "idola of the world and the cave" expose us, we shall rather be astonished that so many

probable rules of civil prudence have been treasured up and confirmed by experience, than disposed to give them a higher place in philosophy than they can claim.

73. It might be alleged in reply to these considerations, that, admitting the absence of a strictly scientific certainty in moral reasoning, we have yet, as seems Considerations on the other side. acknowledged on the other side, a great body of probable inferences, in the extensive knowledge and sagacious application of which most of human wisdom consists. And all that is required of us, in dealing either with moral evidence or with the conclusions we draw from it, is to estimate the probability of neither too high; an error from which the severe and patient discipline of the inductive philosophy is most likely to secure us. It would be added by some, that the theory of probabilities deduces a wonderful degree of certainty from things very uncertain, when a sufficient number of experiments can be made; and thus, that events depending upon the will of mankind, even under circumstances the most anomalous and apparently irreducible to principles, may be calculated with a precision inexplicable to any one who has paid little attention to the subject. This, perhaps, may appear rather a curious application of mathematical science, than one from which our moral reasonings are likely to derive much benefit, especially as the conditions under which a very high probability can mathematically be obtained involve a greater number of trials than experience will generally furnish. It is, nevertheless, a field that deserves to be more fully explored: the success of those who have attempted to apply analytical processes to moral probabilities has not hitherto been very encouraging, inasmuch as they have often come to results falsified by experience; but a more scrupulous regard to all the conditions of each problem may perhaps obviate many sources of error.<sup>1</sup>

74. It seems, upon the whole, that we should neither con-

<sup>1</sup> A calculation was published not long since, said to be on the authority of an eminent living philosopher, according to which, granting a moderate probability that each of twelve jurors would decide rightly, the chances in favor of the rectitude of their unanimous verdict were made something extravagantly high: I think, about 8,000 to 1. It is more easy to perceive the fallacies of this pretended demonstration, than to explain how a man of great acuteness should have over-

looked them. One among many is, that it assumes the giving an unanimous verdict at all to be voluntary: whereas, in practice, the jury must decide one way or the other. We must deduct, therefore, a fraction expressing the probability that some of the twelve have wrongly concealed their opinions to the rest. One danger of this rather favorite application of mathematical principles to moral probabilities, as indeed it is of statistical tables (a remark of far wider extent, is, that, by

ceive the inductive method to be useless in regard to any subject but physical science, nor deny the peculiar advantages it possesses in those inquiries rather than others. What must in all studies be important, is the habit of turning round the subject of our investigation in every light, the observation of every thing that is peculiar, the exclusion of all that we find on reflection to be extraneous. In historical and antiquarian researches, in all critical examination which turns upon facts, in the scrutiny of judicial evidence, a great part of Lord Bacon's method — not, of course, all the experimental rules of the *Novum Organum* — has, as I conceive, a legitimate application.<sup>1</sup> I would refer any one

considering mankind merely as units, it practically habituates the mind to a moral and social levelling, as inconsistent with a just estimate of men as it is characteristic of the present age.

<sup>1</sup> The principle of Bacon's prerogative instances, and perhaps in some cases a very analogous application of them, appear to hold in our inquiries into historical evidence. The fact sought to be ascertained in the one subject corresponds to the physical law in the other. The testimonies, as we, though rather laxly, call them, or passages in books from which we infer the fact, correspond to the observations or experiments from which we deduce the law. The necessity of a sufficient induction by searching for all proof that may bear on the question, is as manifest in one case as in the other. The exclusion of precarious and inconclusive evidence is alike indispensable in both. The selection of prerogative instances, or such as carry with them satisfactory conviction, requires the same sort of inventive and reasoning powers. It is easy to illustrate this by examples. Thus, in the controversy concerning the Icon Basilike, the admission of Gauden's claim by Lord Clarendon is in the nature of a *prerogative instance*: it renders the supposition of the falsehood of that claim highly improbable. But the many second-hand and hearsay testimonies, which may be alleged on the other side to prove that the book was written by King Charles, are not prerogative instances, because their falsehood will be found to involve very little improbability. So, in a different controversy, the silence of some of the fathers, as to the text, commonly called, of the three heavenly witnesses, even while expounding the context of the passage, may be reckoned a *prerogative instance*; a decisive proof that they did not know it or did not believe it genuine; because,

if they did, no motive can be conceived for the omission. But the silence of Laurentius Valla as to its absence from the manuscripts on which he commented is no prerogative instance to prove that it was contained in them, because it is easy to perceive that he might have motives for saying nothing; and though the negative argument, as it is called, or inference that a fact is not true because such and such persons have not mentioned it, is, taken generally, weaker than positive testimony, it will frequently supply prerogative instances where the latter does not. Launoj, in a little treatise, *De Auctoritate Negantis Argumenti*, which displays more plain sense than ingenuity or philosophy, lays it down that a fact of a public nature, which is not mentioned by any writer within two hundred years of the time, supposing, of course, that there is extant a competent number of writers who would naturally have mentioned it, is not to be believed. The period seems rather arbitrary, and was possibly so considered by himself; but the general principle is of the highest importance in historical criticism. Thus, in the once-celebrated question of Pope Joan, the silence of all writers near the time, as to so wonderful a fact, was justly deemed a kind of *prerogative argument*, when set in opposition to the many repetitions of the story in later ages. But the silence of Gildas and Bede as to the victories of Arthur is no such argument against their reality, because they were not under an historical obligation, or any strong motive which would prevent their silence. Generally speaking, the more anomalous and interesting an event is, the stronger is the argument against its truth from the silence of contemporaries, on account of the propensity of mankind to believe and recount the marvellous; and the weaker is the argument from the testimony of

who may doubt this to his History of Winds, as one sample of what we mean by the Baconian method, and ask whether a kind of investigation, analogous to what is therein pursued for the sake of eliciting physical truths, might not be employed in any analytical process where general or even particular facts are sought to be known. Or, if an example is required of such an investigation, let us look at the copious induction from the past and actual history of mankind, upon which Malthus established his general theory of the causes which have retarded the natural progress of population. Upon all these subjects before mentioned, there has been an astonishing improvement in the reasoning of the learned, and perhaps of the world at large, since the time of Bacon, though much remains very defective. In what degree it may be owing to the prevalence of a physical philosophy founded upon his inductive logic, it might not be uninteresting to inquire.<sup>1</sup>

75. It is probable that Lord Bacon never much followed up in his own mind that application of his method to psychological, and still less to moral and political subjects, which he has declared himself to intend. The distribution of the *Instauratio Magna*, which he has prefixed to it, relates wholly to physical science. He has in no one instance given an example, in the *Novum Organum*, from moral philosophy, and one only, that of artificial mem-

Bacon's  
aptitude for  
moral sub-  
jects.

ories times for the same reason. A similar analogy holds also in jurisprudence. The principle of our law, rejecting hearsay and secondary evidence, is founded on the Baconian rule. Fifty persons may depose that they have heard of a fact or of the circumstance; but the eye-witness is the prerogative instance. It would carry us too far to develop this at length, even if I were fully prepared to do so; but this much may lead us to think, that whoever shall fill up that lamentable *desideratum*, the logic of evidence, ought to have familiarised himself with the *Novum Organum*.

<sup>1</sup> "The effects which Bacon's writings have hitherto produced have indeed been far more conspicuous in physics than in the science of mind. Even here, however, they have been great and most important, as well as in some collateral branches of knowledge, such as natural jurisprudence, political economy, criticism, and morals, which spring up from the same root, or rather which are branches of that tree of which the science of mind is the trunk."

—Stewart's *Philosophical Essays*, Preface. Dissertation. The principal advantage, perhaps, of those habits of reasoning which the Baconian methods, whether learned directly or through the many disciples of that school, have a tendency to generate, is, that they render men cautious and pains-taking in the pursuit of truth, and therefore restrain them from deciding too soon. "Nemo reperitur qui in rebus ipse et experientia morum fuerit legitimus." These words are more frequently true of moral and political reasoning than of any others. Men apply historical or personal experience; but they apply it hastily, and without giving themselves time for either a copious or an exact induction; the great majority being too much influenced by passion, party-spirit, or vanity, or perhaps by affections morally right, but not the less dangerous in reasoning to maintain the patient and dispassionate suspense of judgment which ought to be the condition of our inquiries.



ory, from what he would have called logic.<sup>1</sup> But we must constantly remember that the philosophy of Bacon was left exceedingly incomplete. Many lives would not have sufficed for what he had planned, and he gave only the leisure hours of his own. It is evident that he had turned his thoughts to physical philosophy rather for an exercise of his reasoning faculties, and out of his insatiable thirst for knowledge, than from any peculiar aptitude for their subjects, much less any advantage of opportunity for their cultivation. He was more eminently the philosopher of human than of general nature. Hence he is exact as well as profound in all his reflections on civil life and mankind; while his conjectures in natural philosophy, though often very acute, are apt to wander far from the truth in consequence of his defective acquaintance with the phenomena of nature. His *Centuries of Natural History* give abundant proof of this. He is, in all these inquiries, like one doubtfully, and by degrees, making out a distant prospect, but often deceived by the haze. But if we compare what may be found in the sixth, seventh, and eighth books *De Augmentis*, in the *Essays*, the *History of Henry VII.*, and the various short treatises contained in his works on moral and political wisdom and on human nature, from experience of which all such wisdom is drawn, with the *Rhetoric*, *Ethics*, and *Politics* of Aristotle, or with the historians most celebrated for their deep insight into civil society and human character, — with Thucydides, Tacitus, Philip de Comines, Machiavel, Davila, Hume, — we shall, I think, find that one man may almost be compared with all of these together. When Galileo is named as equal to Bacon, it is to be remembered that Galileo was no moral or political philosopher; and, in this department, Leibnitz certainly falls very short of Bacon. Burke, perhaps, comes, of all modern writers, the nearest to him; but, though Bacon may not be more profound than Burke, he is more copious and comprehensive.

76. The comparison of Bacon and Galileo is naturally built upon the influence which, in the same age, they exerted in overthrowing the philosophy of the schools, and in founding that new discipline of real science which has rendered the last centuries glorious. Hume

Comparison  
of Bacon  
and Galileo.

<sup>1</sup> *Nov. Organ.*, li. 26. It may, however, be observed, that we find a few passages in the ethical part of *De Augmentis*, lib. vii. cap. 3, which show that he had some notions of moral induction germinating in his mind.

has given the preference to the latter, who made accessions to the domain of human knowledge so splendid, so inaccessible to caviil, so unequivocal in their results, that the majority of mankind would perhaps be carried along with this decision. There seems, however, to be no doubt that the mind of Bacon was more comprehensive and profound. But these comparisons are apt to involve *incommensurable* relations. In their own intellectual characters, they bore no great resemblance to each other. Bacon had scarce any knowledge of geometry, and so far ranks much below not only Galileo, but Descartes, Newton, and Leibnitz, — all signalized by wonderful discoveries in the science of quantity, or in that part of physics which employs it. He has, in one of the profound aphorisms of the *Novum Organum*, distinguished the two species of philosophical genius; one more apt to perceive the differences of things, the other their analogies. In a mind of the highest order, neither of these powers will be really deficient; and his own inductive method is at once the best exercise of both, and the best safeguard against the excess of either. But, upon the whole, it may certainly be said, that the genius of Lord Bacon was naturally more inclined to collect the resemblances of nature than to note her differences. This is the case with men like him of sanguine temper, warm fancy, and brilliant wit; but it is not the frame of mind which is best suited to strict reasoning.

77. It is no proof of a solid acquaintance with Lord Bacon's philosophy, to deify his name as the ancient schools did those of their founders, or even to exaggerate the powers of his genius. Powers they were surprisingly great, yet limited in their range, and not in all respects equal; nor could they overcome every impediment of circumstance. Even of Bacon it may be said, that he attempted more than he has achieved, and perhaps more than he clearly apprehended. His objects appear sometimes indistinct, and I am not sure that they are always consistent. In the *Advancement of Learning*, he aspired to fill up, or at least to indicate, the deficiencies in every department of knowledge: he gradually confined himself to philosophy, and at length to physics. But few of his works can be deemed complete, not even the treatise *De Augmentis*, which comes nearer to this than most of the rest. Hence the study of Lord Bacon is difficult, and not, as I conceive, very well adapted to those who have made no progress whatever

in the exact sciences, nor accustomed themselves to independent thinking. They have never been made a text-book in our universities; though, after a judicious course of preparatory studies, by which I mean a good foundation in geometry and the philosophical principles of grammar, the first book of the *Novum Organum* might be very advantageously combined with the instruction of an enlightened lecturer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It by no means is to be inferred, that because the actual text of Bacon is not always such as can be well understood by very young men, I object to their being led to the real principles of inductive philosophy, which alone will teach them to think, firmly but not presumptuously, for themselves. Few defects, on the contrary, in our system of education, are more visible than the want of an adequate course of logic; and this is not likely to be rectified so long as the Aristotelian methods challenge that denomination exclusively of all other aids to the reasoning faculties. The position that nothing else is to be called logic, were it even agreeable to the derivation of the word, which it is not, or to the usage of the ancients, which is by no means uniformly the case, or to that of modern philosophy and correct language, which is certainly not at all the case, is no answer to the question, whether what we call logic does not deserve to be taught at all.

A living writer of high reputation, who has at least fully understood his own subject, and illustrated it better than his predecessors, from a more enlarged reading and thinking, wherein his own acuteness has been improved by the writers of the Baconian school, has been unfortunately instrumental, by the very merits of his treatise on Logic, in keeping up the prejudices on this subject, which have generally been deemed characteristic of the university to which he belonged. All the reflection I have been able to give to the subject has convinced me of the inefficacy of the syllogistic art in enabling us to think rightly for ourselves, or, which is part of thinking rightly, to detect those fallacies of others which might impose on our understanding before we have acquired that art. It has been often alleged, and, as far as I can judge, with perfect truth, that no man, who can be worth answering, ever commits, except through mere inadvertence, any paralogisms which the common logic serves to point out. It is easy enough to construct syllogisms which sin against its rules; but the question is, by whom they were employed. For though it is not uncommon, as I am aware, to

represent an adversary as reasoning illogically, this is generally effected by putting his argument into our own words. The great fault of all, over induction, or the assertion of a general premise upon an insufficient examination of particulars, cannot be discovered or cured by any logical skill; and this is the error into which men really fall, not that of omitting to distribute the middle term, though it comes in effect, and often in appearance, to the same thing. I do not contend that the rules of syllogism, which are very short and simple, ought not to be learned; or that there may not be some advantage in occasionally stating our own argument, or calling on another to state his, in a regular form (an advantage, however, rather dialectical, which is, in other words, rhetorical, than one which affects the reasoning faculties themselves); nor do I deny that it is philosophically worth while to know that all *general reasoning by words* may be reduced into syllogism, as it is to know that most of plane geometry may be resolved into the superposition of equal triangles; but to represent this portion of logical science as the whole, appears to me almost like teaching the scholar Euclid's axioms, and the axiomatic theorem to which I have alluded, and calling this the science of geometry. The following passage from the Port-Royal logic is very judicious and candid, giving as much to the Aristotelian system as it deserves: "Cette partie, que nous avons maintenant à traiter, qui comprend les règles du raisonnement, est estimée la plus importante de la logique, et c'est presque l'unique qu'on y traite avec quelque soin; mais il y a sujet de douter si elle est aussi utile qu'on se l'imagine. La plupart des erreurs des hommes, comme nous avons déjà dit ailleurs, viennent bien plus de ce qu'ils raisonnent sur de faux principes, que non pas de ce qu'ils raisonnent mal suivant leurs principes. Il arrive rarement qu'on se laisse tromper par des raisonnemens qui ne soient faux que parce que la conséquence en est mal tirée; et ceux qui ne seroient pas capables d'en reconnoître la fausseté par la seule lumière de la raison, ne le seroient pas ordinairement d'entendre les règles que l'on en donne, et encore

78. The ignorance of Bacon in mathematics, and, what was much worse, his inadequate notions of their utility, must be reckoned among the chief defects in his philosophical writings. In a remarkable passage of the *Advancement of Learning*, he held mathematics to be a part of metaphysics; but the place of this is altered in the *Latin*, and they are treated as merely auxiliary or instrumental to physical inquiry. He had some prejudice against pure mathematics, and thought they had been unduly elevated in comparison with the realities of nature. "I know not," he says, "how it has arisen that mathematics and logic, which ought to be the serving-maids of physical philosophy,

His prejudice against mathematics.

ne s'en desappliquent. Néanmoins, quand on ne considéreroit ces règles que comme des vérités spéculatives, elles serviroient toujours à exercer l'esprit; et de plus, on ne peut nier qu'elles n'aient quelque usage en quelques rencontres, et à l'égard de quelques personnes, qui, étant d'un naturel vif et pénétrant, ne se laissent quelquefois tromper par des fausses conséquences, que faute d'attention, à quoi la réflexion qu'ils feroient sur ces règles seroit capable de remédier." — *Art de Penser*, part III. How different is this sensible passage from one quoted from some anonymous writer in *Whately's Logic*, p. 34! — "A fallacy consists of an ingenious mixture of truth and falsehood so entangled, so intimately blended, that the fallacy is, in the chemical phrase, held in solution: one drop of sound logic is that test which immediately disunites them, makes the foreign substance visible, and precipitates it to the bottom." One fallacy, it might be answered, as common as any, is the *false analogy*, the misleading the mind by a comparison where there is no real proportion or resemblance. The chemist's test is the necessary means of detecting the foreign substance; if the "drop of sound logic" be such, it is strange that lawyers, mathematicians, and mankind in general, should so sparingly employ it: the fact being notorious, that those most eminent for strong reasoning powers are rarely conversant with the syllogistic method. It is also well known, that these "intimately blended mixtures of truth and falsehood" perplex no man of plain sense, except when they are what is called *extralogical*; cases wherein the art of syllogism is of no use.

[The syllogistic logic appears to have been more received into favor of late among philosophers, both here and on the Continent, than it was in the two preceding centuries. The main question, it is to be kept in mind, does not relate to its

principles as a science, but to the practical usefulness of its rules as an art. An able writer has lately observed, that "he must be fortunate in the clearness of his mind, who, knowing the logical mode, is never obliged to have recourse to it to destroy ambiguity or heighten evidence, and particularly so in his opponents, who, in verbal or written controversy, never finds it necessary to employ it in trying their arguments." *Penny Cyclopædia*, art. "Syllogism." Every one must judge of this by his own experience: the profound thinker whose hand seems discernible in this article, has a strong claim to authority in favor of the utility of the syllogistic method; yet we cannot help remembering that it is very rarely employed even in controversy, where I really believe it to be a valuable weapon against an antagonist, and capable of producing no small effect on the indifferent reader or hearer, especially if he is not of a very sharp apprehension; and moreover that, as I at least believe, the proportion of untheoretical, political, or theological reasoners, who have acquired or retained any tolerable expertness in the technical part of logic, is far from high, nor am I aware that they fall into fallacies for want of knowledge of it; but I mean strictly such fallacies as the syllogistic method alone seems to correct. What comes nearest to syllogistic reasoning in practice is that of geometry: as thus,  $A = B$ ; but  $C = A$ ; ergo,  $C = B$ , is essentially a syllogism, but not according to form. If, however, equality of magnitude may be considered as identity, according to the dictum of Aristotle, ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς ἢ λογικῶς ὅμοιος, the foregoing is regular in logical form; and if we take A, B, and C for ratios, which are properly identical, not equal, this may justly be called a syllogism. But those who contend most for the formal logic seldom much regard its use in geometrical science. — 1847.]

yet asserting to vaunt the certainty that belongs to them, presuming to exercise a dominion over her." It is, in my opinion, erroneous to speak of geometry, which relates to the realities of space, and to natural objects so far as extended, as a mere handmaid of physical philosophy, and not rather a part of it. Playfair has made some good remarks on the advantages derived to experimental philosophy itself from the mere application of geometry and algebra. And one of the reflections which this ought to excite is, that we are not to conceive, as some hastily do, that there can be no real utility to mankind, even of that kind of utility which consists in multiplying the conveniences and luxuries of life, springing from theoretical and speculative inquiry. The history of algebra, so barren in the days of Tartaglia and Vieta, so productive of *wealth*, when applied to dynamical calculations in our own, may be a sufficient answer.

79. One of the petty blemishes, which, though lost in the Bacon's ex- splendor of Lord Bacon's excellences, it is not cess of wit. unfair to mention, is connected with the peculiar characteristics of his mind: he is sometimes too metaphorical and witty. His remarkable talent for discovering analogies seems to have inspired him with too much regard to them as arguments, even when they must appear to any common reader fanciful and far-fetched. His terminology, chiefly for the same reason, is often a little affected, and, in Latin, rather barbarous. The divisions of his prerogative instances in the *Novum Organum* are not always founded upon intelligible distinctions. And the general obscurity of the style, neither himself nor his assistants being good masters of the Latin language, which at the best is never flexible or copious enough for our philosophy, renders the perusal of both his great works too laborious for the impatient reader. Brucker has well observed, that the *Novum Organum* has been neglected by the generality, and proved of far less service than it would otherwise have been in philosophy, in consequence of these very defects, as well as the real depth of the author's mind.<sup>1</sup>

80. What has been the fame of Bacon, "the wisest, great-  
est of mankind," it is needless to say. What has been his

<sup>1</sup> "Ergo hanc nobilitatem fructibus ab illis est qui in novum methodum inveniunt, sed non per se capiunt. Quod si parvi plus transiret de philosophia habere, et novum methodum de philosophia

artificis benevolentia non remaneret, longe plus, quam factum est, contulisset ad philosophiam emendationem. His enim obstantibus a perique hoc organum neglectum est." — Hist. Philos., v. 56.



real influence over mankind, how much of our enlarged and exact knowledge may be attributed to his inductive method, what of this again has been due to a thorough study of his writings, and what to an indirect and secondary acquaintance with them, are questions of another kind, and less easily solved. Stewart, the philosopher who has dwelt most on the praises of Bacon, while he conceives him to have exercised a considerable influence over the English men of science in the seventeenth century, supposes, on the authority of Montucla, that he did not "command the general admiration of Europe," till the publication of the preliminary discourse to the French Encyclopædia by Diderot and D'Alembert. This, however, is by much too precipitate a conclusion. He became almost immediately known on the Continent. Cassendi was one of his most ardent admirers. Descartes mentions him, I believe, once only, in a letter to Mersenne in 1632;<sup>1</sup> but he was of all men the most unwilling to praise a contemporary. It may be said that these were philosophers, and that their testimony does not imply the admiration of mankind. But writers of a very different character mention him in a familiar manner. Richelieu is said to have highly esteemed Lord Bacon.<sup>2</sup> And it may in some measure be due to this, that in the *Sentimens de l'Académie Française sur le Cid*, he is alluded to simply by the name Bacon, as one well known.<sup>3</sup> Voiture, in a letter to Costar, about the same time, bestows high eulogy on some passages of Bacon which his correspondent had sent to him, and observes that Horace would have been astonished to hear a barbarian Briton discourse in such a style.<sup>4</sup> The treatise *De Augmentis* was republished in France in 1624, the year after its appearance in England. It was translated into French as early as 1632; no great proofs of neglect. Editions came

<sup>1</sup> Vol. vi. p. 210, edit. Cousin.

<sup>2</sup> The only authority that I can now quote for this is not very good, that of Aubrey's Manuscripts, which I find in Howard's Anecdotes, iv. 328. But it seems not improbable. The same book quotes Richelieu as saying, "Croyons donc, pour l'honneur du Chancelier Bacon, que toutes les fables des anciens sont sages; et tous leurs songes mystères, et de celles-là qui sont certaines pures fables, il n'y en a pas une, quelque bizarre et extravagante qu'elle soit, qui n'ait son fondement dans l'histoire, si l'on en veut croire Bacon, et

qui n'ait été déguisée de la sorte par les sages du vieux temps pour la rendre plus utile aux peuples."

<sup>3</sup> P. 44 (1638).

<sup>4</sup> "J'ai trouvé parfaitement beau tout ce que vous me mandez de Bacon. Mais ne vous semble-t'il pas qu'Horace, qui disoit, *Vitam Britannæ hospitibus ferre*, seroit bien étonné d'entendre un barbare discourir comme cela?" Costar is said by Bayle to have borrowed much from Bacon. La Motte le Vayer mentions him in the *Dialogues*: in fact, instances are nume-  
rous.

out in Holland, 1645, 1652, and 1662. Even the *Novum Organum*, which, as has been said, never became so popular as his other writings, was thrice printed in Holland, in 1645, 1650, and 1660.<sup>1</sup> Leibnitz and Puffendorf are loud in their expressions of admiration, the former ascribing to him the revival of true philosophy as fully as we can at present.<sup>2</sup> I should be more inclined to doubt whether he were adequately valued by his countrymen in his own time, or in the immediately subsequent period. Under the first Stuarts, there was little taste among studious men but for theology, and chiefly for a theology which, proceeding with an extreme deference to authority, could not but generate a disposition of mind, even upon other subjects, alien to the progressive and inquisitive spirit of the inductive philosophy.<sup>3</sup> The institution of the Royal Society, or rather the love of physical science out of which that institution arose, in the second part of the seventeenth century, made England resound with the name of her illustrious chancellor. Few now spoke of him without

<sup>1</sup> Montagu's *Life of Bacon*, p. 407. He has not mentioned an edition at Strasburg, 1635, which is in the British Museum.

There is also an edition, without time or place, in the catalogue of the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Brucker, v. 95. Stewart says that "Bayle does not give above twelve lines to Bacon;" but he calls him one of the greatest men of his age, and the length of an article in Bayle was never designed to be a measure of the merit of its subject. — [The reception of Bacon's philosophical writings on the Continent has been elaborately proved against Stewart, in a dissertation by Mr. Macvey Napier, published in the eighth volume of the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*. — 1842.]

<sup>3</sup> It is not uncommon to meet with persons, especially who are or have been engaged in teaching others dogmatically what they have themselves received in the like manner, to whom the inductive philosophy appears a mere school of scepticism, or at best wholly inapplicable to any subjects which require entire conviction. A certain deduction from certain premises is the only reasoning they acknowledge. Lord Bacon has a remarkable passage on this in the 9th book *De Augmentis*. "Postquam articuli et principia religionis jam in redibus suis fuerint locata, ita ut a rationali examine penitus eximantur, tum demum conceditur ab illis Religionem derivare ac deducere secundum analogiam ipsorum. In rebus quidem

naturalibus hoc non tenet. Nam et ipsa principia examini subjiciuntur; per inductionem, inquam, hoc minime per syllogismum. Atque eadem illa nullam habent cum ratione repugnantiam, ut ab eodem fonte cum primis propositiones, tum mediz, deducantur. Alter fit in religione: ubi et primas propositiones anthropystatas sunt atque per se subsistentes; et rursus non reguntur ab illa ratione quas propositiones consequentes deducit. Neque tamen hoc fit in religione sola, sed etiam in aliis scientiis, tam gravioribus, quam levioribus, ubi scilicet propositiones humane placita sunt, non posita; siquidem et in illis rationis usus absolutus esse non potest. Videmus enim in ludis, puta schacorum, aut similibus, priores ludi normas et leges merè positivas esse, et ad placitum; quas recipi, non in disputationem vocari, prorursus oportet; ut vere vincas, et peritè lusum instituas, ad artificiosum est et rationale. Eodem modo fit et in legibus humanis; in quibus hæc paucae sunt maxime, ut loquuntur, hoc est, placita mera jura, quas auctoritate magis quam ratione nituntur, neque in disputationem veniunt. Quid vero fit iustissimum, non absolutè, sed relativè, hoc est ex analogiâ illarum maximarum, id demum rationale est, et latum disputationis campum præbet." This passage, well weighed, may show us where, why, and by whom, the synthetic and syllogistic methods have been preferred to the inductive and analytical.

a kind of homage that only the greatest men receive. Yet still it was by natural philosophers alone that the writings of Bacon were much studied. The editions of his works, except the Essays, were few: the *Novum Organum* never came separately from the English press.<sup>1</sup> They were not even frequently quoted; for I believe it will be found that the fashion of referring to the brilliant passages of the *De Augmentis* and the *Novum Organum*, at least in books designed for the general reader, is not much older than the close of the last century. Scotland has the merit of having led the way: Reid, Stewart, Robison, and Playfair turned that which had been a blind veneration into a rational worship; and I should suspect that more have read Lord Bacon within these thirty years than in the two preceding centuries. It may be an usual consequence of the enthusiastic panegyrics lately poured upon his name, that a more positive efficiency has sometimes been attributed to his philosophical writings than they really possessed; and it might be asked whether Italy, where he was probably not much known, were not the true school of experimental philosophy in Europe, whether his methods of investigation were not chiefly such as men of sagacity and lovers of truth might simultaneously have devised. But, whatever may have been the case with respect to actual discoveries in science, we must give to written wisdom its proper meed: no books prior to those of Lord Bacon carried mankind so far on the road to truth; none have obtained so thorough a triumph over arrogant usurpation without seeking to substitute another; and he may be compared to those liberators of nations who have given them laws by which they might govern themselves, and retained no homage but their gratitude.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *De Augmentis* was only once published after the first edition, in 1683. An indifferent translation, by Gilbert Watta, came out in 1640. No edition of Bacon's Works was published in England before 1774; another appeared in 1740, and there have been several since. But they had been printed at Frankfort in 1686. It is unnecessary to observe, that many copies of the foreign editions were brought to this country. This is mostly taken from Mr. Montagu's account.

<sup>2</sup> I have met, since this passage was written, with one in Stewart's *Life of Reid*, which seems to state the effects of Bacon's philosophy in a just and temperate spirit, and which I rather quote because this writer has, by his eulogies on that philo-

sophy, led some to an exaggerated notion. "The influence of Bacon's genius on the subsequent progress of physical discovery has been seldom duly appreciated; by some writers almost entirely overlooked, and by others considered as the sole cause of the reformation in science which has since taken place. Of these two extremes, the latter certainly is the least wide of the truth: for, in the whole history of letters, no other individual can be mentioned whose exertions have had so indubitable an effect in forwarding the intellectual progress of mankind. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged, that, before the era when Bacon appeared, various philosophers in different parts of Europe had struck into the right path; and it may

## SECTION III.

## On the Metaphysical Philosophy of Descartes.

81. **RENÉ DESCARTES** was born in 1596, of an ancient Early life of family in Touraine. An inquisitive curiosity into Descartes. the nature and causes of all he saw is said to have distinguished his childhood, and this was certainly accompanied by an uncommon facility and clearness of apprehension. At a very early age, he entered the college of the Jesuits at La Flèche, and passed through their entire course of literature and philosophy. It was now, at the age of sixteen, as he tells us, that he began to reflect, with little satisfaction, on his studies; finding his mind beset with error, and obliged to confess that he had learned nothing but the conviction of his ignorance. Yet he knew that he had been educated in a famous school, and that he was not deemed behind his contemporaries. The ethics, the logic, even the geometry, of the ancients, did not fill his mind with that clear stream of truth for which he was ever thirsting. On leaving La Flèche, the young Descartes mingled for some years in the world, and served as a volunteer both under Prince Maurice, and in the Imperial Army. Yet during this period there were intervals when he withdrew himself wholly from society, and devoted his leisure to mathematical science. Some germs also of his peculiar philosophy were already ripening in his mind.

perhaps he doubted, whether any one important rule with respect to the true method of investigation be contained in his works, of which no hint can be traced in those of his predecessors. His great merit lay in concentrating their feeble and scattered lights; fixing the attention of philosophers on the distinguishing characteristics of true and of false science, by a felicity of illustration peculiar to himself, seconded by the commanding powers of a bold and figurative eloquence. The method of investigation which he recommended had been previously followed in every instance in which any solid discovery had been made with respect to the laws of nature: but it had been followed accidentally and without any regular pre-

conceived design; and it was reserved for him to reduce to rule and method what others had effected, either fortuitously, or from some momentary glimpse of the truth. These remarks are not intended to detract from the just glory of Bacon; for they apply to all those, without exception, who have systematised the principles of any of the arts. Indeed they apply less forcibly to him than to any other philosopher whose studies have been directed to objects analogous to his; inasmuch as we know of no art of which the rules have been reduced successfully into a didactic form, when the art itself was as much in infancy as experimental philosophy was when Bacon wrote "—Account of Life and Writings of Reid, sect. 2.

82. Descartes was twenty-three years old, when, passing a solitary winter in his quarters at Neuburg, on the Danube, he began to revolve in his mind the futility of all existing systems of philosophy, and the discrepancy of opinions among the generality of mankind, which rendered it probable that no one had yet found out the road to real science. He determined, therefore, to set about the investigation of truth for himself, erasing from his mind all preconceived judgments, as having been hastily and precariously taken up. He laid down for his guidance a few fundamental rules of logic, such as to admit nothing as true which he did not clearly perceive, and to proceed from the simpler notions to the more complex; taking the method of geometers, by which they had gone so much farther than others, for the true art of reasoning. Commencing, therefore, with the mathematical sciences, and observing, that, however different in their subjects, they treat properly of nothing but the relations of quantity, he fell, almost accidentally, as his words seem to import, on the great discovery that geometrical curves may be expressed algebraically.<sup>1</sup> This gave him more hope of success in applying his method to other parts of philosophy.

83. Nine years more elapsed, during which Descartes, though he quitted military service, continued to observe mankind in various parts of Europe, still keeping his heart fixed on the great aim he had proposed to himself, but, as he confesses, without having framed the scheme of any philosophy beyond those of his contemporaries. He deemed his time of life immature for so stupendous a task. But at the age of thirty-three, with little notice to his friends, he quitted Paris, convinced that absolute retirement was indispensable for that rigorous investigation of first principles which he now determined to institute, and retired into Holland. In this country he remained eight years so completely aloof from the distractions of the world, that he concealed his very place of residence, though preserving an intercourse of letters with many friends in France.

84. In 1637, he broke upon the world with a volume containing the Discourse upon Method, the Dioptrics, the Meteors, and the Geometry. It is only with the first that we are for

<sup>1</sup> Œuvres de Descartes, par Cousin, Paris, 1824, vol. i. p. 143.



the present concerned.<sup>1</sup> In this discourse, the most interesting, perhaps, of Descartes' writings, on account of the picture of his life and of the progress of his studies that it furnishes, we find the Cartesian metaphysics, which do not consist of many articles, almost as fully detailed as in any of his later works. In the *Meditationes de Prima Philosophia*, published in 1641, these fundamental principles are laid down again more at length. He invited the criticism of philosophers on these famous *Meditations*. They did not refuse the challenge; and seven sets of objections from as many different quarters, with seven replies from Descartes himself, are subjoined to the later editions of the *Meditations*. The *Principles of Philosophy*, published in Latin in 1644, contains what may be reckoned the final statement, which occupies most of the first book, written with uncommon conciseness and precision. The beauty of philosophical style which distinguishes Descartes is never more seen than in this first book of the *Principia*, the translation of which was revised by Clerselier, an eminent friend of the author. It is a contrast at once to the elliptical brevity of Aristotle, who hints, or has been supposed to hint, the most important positions in a short clause, and to the verbose, figurative declamation of many modern metaphysicians. In this admirable perspicuity, Descartes was imitated by his disciples Arnauld and Malebranche, especially the former. His unfinished posthumous treatise, the *Inquiry after Truth by Natural Reason*, is not carried farther than a partial development of the same leading principles of Cartesianism. There is, consequently, a great deal of apparent repetition in the works of Descartes, but such as on attentive consideration will show, not perhaps much real variance, but some new lights that had occurred to the author in the course of his reflections.<sup>2</sup>

85. In pursuing the examination of the first principles of knowledge, Descartes perceived not only that he had cause to doubt of the various opinions which he had found current among men, from that very circumstance of their variety, but

<sup>1</sup> Œuvres de Descartes, par Cousin, Paris, 1824, vol. i. pp. 121-212.

<sup>2</sup> A work has lately been published, *Essais Philosophiques, suivis de la Métaphysique de Descartes, assemblée et mise en ordre par L. A. Gruyer*, 4 vols., Bruxelles, 1852. In the fourth volume, we find the metaphysical passages in the writ-

tings of Descartes, including his correspondence, arranged methodically in his own words, but with the omission of a large part of the objections to the *Meditations* and of his replies. I did not, however, see this work in time to make use of it.

that the sources of all which he had received for truth themselves, namely, the senses, had afforded him no indisputable certainty. He began to recollect how often he had been misled by appearances, which had at first sight given no intimation of their fallacy, and asked himself in vain by what infallible test he could discern the reality of external objects, or at least their conformity to his idea of them. The strong impressions made in sleep led him to inquire whether all he saw and felt might not be in a dream. It was true that there seemed to be some notions more elementary than the rest, such as extension, figure, duration, which could not be reckoned fallacious; nor could he avoid owning, that, if there were not an existing triangle in the world, the angles of one conceived by the mind, though it were in sleep, must appear equal to two right angles. But, even in this certitude of demonstration, he soon found something deficient: to err in geometrical reasoning is not impossible; why might he not err in this? especially in a train of consequences, the particular terms of which are not at the same instant present to the mind. But, above all, there might be a superior being, powerful enough and willing to deceive him. It was no kind of answer to treat this as improbable, or as an arbitrary hypothesis. He had laid down as a maxim that nothing could be received as truth which was not demonstrable; and in one place, rather hyperbolically, and indeed extravagantly in appearance, says that he made little difference between merely probable and false suppositions; meaning this, however, as we may presume, in the sense of geometers, who would say the same thing.

86. But, divesting himself thus of all belief in what the world deemed most unquestionable, plunged in an abyss, as it seemed for a time, he soon found his feet on a rock, from which he sprang upwards to an unclouded sun. Doubting all things, abandoning all things, he came to the question, What is it that doubts and denies? Something it must be: he might be deceived by a superior power; but it was he that was deceived. He felt his own existence: the proof of it was that he did feel it; that he had affirmed, that he now doubted, in a word, that he was a thinking substance. *Cogito: Ergo sum* — this famous enthymeme of the Cartesian philosophy veiled in rather formal language that which was to him, and must be to us all, the

He begins  
by doubt-  
ing all.

His first  
step in  
knowledge

eternal basis of conviction, which no argument can strengthen, which no sophistry can impair,—the consciousness of a self within, a percipient indivisible Ego.<sup>1</sup> The only proof of this is, that it admits of no proof; that no man can pretend to doubt of his own existence with sincerity, or to express a doubt without absurd and inconsistent language.

87. The scepticism of Descartes, it appears, which is merely provisional, is not at all similar to that of the Pyrrhonists, though some of his arguments may have been shafts from their quiver. Nor did he make use, which is somewhat remarkable, of the reasonings afterwards employed by Berkeley against the material world; though no one more frequently distinguished than Descartes between the objective reality, as it was then supposed to be, of ideas in the mind, and the external or sensible reality of things. Scepticism, in fact, was so far from being characteristic of his disposition, that his errors sprang chiefly from the opposite source, little as he was aware of it, from an undue positiveness in theories which he could not demonstrate, or even render highly probable.<sup>2</sup>

88. The certainty of an existing Ego easily led him to that of the operations of the mind, called afterwards by Locke ideas of reflection, the believing, doubting, willing, loving, fearing, which he knew by consciousness, and indeed by means

<sup>1</sup> This word, introduced by the Germans, or originally perhaps by the old Cartesians, is rather awkward, but far less so than the English pronoun *I*, which is also equivocal in sound. Stewart has adopted it as the lesser evil; and it seems reasonable not to scruple the use of a word so convenient, if not necessary, to express the unity of the conscious principle. If it had been employed earlier, I am apt to think that some great metaphysical extravagances would have been avoided, and some fundamental truths more clearly apprehended. Fichte is well known to have made the grand division of *Ich* and *Nicht Ich*, *Ego* and *Non Ego*, the basis of his philosophy; in other words, the difference of subjective and objective reality.

<sup>2</sup> One of the rules Descartes lays down in his posthumous art of logic, is that we ought never to busy ourselves except about objects concerning which our understanding appears capable of acquiring an unquestionable and certain knowledge, vol. xi. p. 204. This is at least too unlimited a proposition, and would exclude, not indeed all probability, but all in-

quiries which must by necessity end in nothing more than probability. Accordingly we find in the next pages, that he made little account of any sciences but arithmetic and geometry, or such others as equal them in certainty. "From all this," he concludes, "we may infer, not that arithmetic and geometry are the only sciences which we must learn, but that he who seeks the road to truth should not trouble himself with any object of which he cannot have as certain a knowledge as of arithmetical and geometrical demonstrations." It is unnecessary to observe what havoc this would make with investigations, even in physics, of the highest importance to mankind.

Beattie, in the Essay on Truth, part ii. chap. 2, has made some unfounded criticisms on the scepticism of Descartes, and endeavors to turn into ridicule his "*Cogito; Ergo sum*." Yet if any one should deny his own, or our existence, I do not see how we could refute him, were he worthy of refutation, but by some such language; and, in fact, it is what Beattie himself says, more paraphrastically, in answering Hume.

of which alone he knew that the Ego existed. He now proceeded a step farther; and, reflecting on the simplest truths of arithmetic and geometry, saw that it was as impossible to doubt of them as of the acts of his mind. But as he had before tried to doubt even of these, on the hypothesis that he might be deceived by a superior intelligent power, he resolved to inquire whether such a power existed, and, if it did, whether it could be a deceiver. The affirmative of the former and the negative of the latter question Descartes established by that extremely subtle reasoning so much celebrated in the seventeenth century, but which has less frequently been deemed conclusive in later times. It is at least that which no man, not fitted by long practice for metaphysical researches, will pretend to embrace.

He arrives  
at more  
certainty.

89. The substance of his argument was this. He found within himself the idea of a perfect Intelligence, eternal, infinite, necessary. This could not come from himself, nor from external things, because both were imperfect, and there could be no more in the effect than there is in the cause. And, this idea requiring a cause, it could have none but an actual being, not a possible being, which is undistinguishable from mere nonentity. If, however, this should be denied, he inquires whether he, with this idea of God, could have existed by any other cause, if there were no God. Not, he argues, by himself; for, if he were the author of his own being, he would have given himself every perfection, in a word, would have been God. Not by his parents; for the same might be said of them, and so forth, if we remount to a series of productive beings. Besides this, as much power is required to preserve as to create; and the continuance of existence in the effect implies the continued operation of the cause.

His proof  
of a Deity.

90. With this argument, in itself sufficiently refined, Descartes blended another still more distant from common apprehension. Necessary existence is involved in the idea of God. All other beings are conceivable in their essence, as things possible; in God alone, his essence and existence are inseparable. Existence is necessary to perfection; hence a perfect being, or God, cannot be conceived without necessary existence. Though I do not know that I have misrepresented Descartes in this result of his very subtle argument, it is difficult not to treat it as a sophism. And it

Another  
proof of it.

was always objected by his adversaries, that he inferred the necessity of the thing from the necessity of the idea, which was the very point in question. It seems impossible to vindicate many of his expressions, from which he never receded in the controversy to which his *Meditations* gave rise. But the long habit of repeating in his mind the same series of reasonings, gave Descartes, as it will always do, an inward assurance of their certainty, which could not be weakened by any objection. The former argument for the being of God, whether satisfactory or not, is to be distinguished from the present.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "From what is said already of the ignorance we are in of the essence of mind, it is evident that we are not able to know whether any mind be necessarily existent by a necessity *a priori* founded in its essence, as we have showed time and space to be. Some philosophers think that such a necessity may be demonstrated of God from the nature of perfection. For God being infinitely, that is, absolutely perfect, they say he must needs be necessarily existent; because, say they, necessary existence is one of the greatest of perfections. But I take this to be one of those false and imaginary arguments that are founded in the abuse of certain terms; and, of all others, this word 'perfection' seems to have suffered most this way. I wish I could clearly understand what these philosophers mean by the word 'perfection,' when they thus say that necessity of existence is perfection. Does perfection here signify the same thing that it does when we say that God is infinitely good, omnipotent, omniscient? Surely perfections are properly asserted of the several powers that attend the essences of things and not of any thing else, but in a very unnatural and improper sense. Perfection is a term of relation; and its sense implies a fitness or agreement to some certain end, and most properly to some power in the thing that is denominated perfect. The term, as the etymology of it shows, is taken from the operation of artists. When an artist proposes to himself to make any thing that shall be serviceable to a certain effect, his work is called more or less perfect, according as it agrees more or less with the design of the artist. From arte, by a similitude of sense, this word has been introduced into morality, and signifies that quality of an agent by which it is able to act agreeable to the end its actions tend to. The metaphysicians who reduce every thing to transcendental considerations have also translated this term into their science, and use it to signify the

agreement that any thing has with that idea which it is required that thing should answer to. This perfection, therefore, belongs to those attributes that constitute the essence of a thing; and that being is properly called the most perfect which has all, the best, and each the completest in its kind, of those attributes which can be united in one essence. Perfection, therefore, belongs to the essence of things, and not properly to their existence; which is not a perfection of any thing, no attribute of it, but only the mere constitution of it is *verum natura*. Necessary existence, therefore, which is a mode of existence, is not a perfection; it being no attribute of the thing no more than existence is, which it is a mode of. But it may be said, that though necessary existence is not a perfection in itself, yet it is so in its cause, upon account of that attribute of the entity from whence it flows; that that attribute must of all others be the most perfect and most excellent, which necessary existence flows from, it being such as cannot be conceived otherwise than as existing. But what excellency, what perfection, is there in all this? Space is necessarily existent on account of extension, which cannot be conceived otherwise than as existing. But what perfection is there in space upon this account, which can in no manner act on any thing, which is entirely devoid of all power; wherein I have showed all perfections to consist? Therefore necessary existence, abstractedly considered, is no perfection; and therefore the idea of infinite perfection does not include, and consequently not prove, God to be necessarily existent. If he be so, it is on account of those attributes of his essence which we have no knowledge of."

I have made this extract from a very short tract, called *Contemplatio Philosophica*, by Brook Taylor, which I found in an unpublished memoir of his life printed by the late Sir William Young in 1708.



91. From the idea of a perfect being, Descartes immediately deduced the truth of his belief in an external world, and in the inferences of his reason. For to deceive his creatures would be an imperfection in God; but God is perfect. Whatever, therefore, is clearly and distinctly apprehended by our reason must be true. We have only to be on our guard against our own precipitancy and prejudice, or surrender of our reason to the authority of others. It is not by our understanding, such as God gave it to us, that we are deceived; but the exercise of our free-will, a high prerogative of our nature, is often so incautious as to make us not discern truth from falsehood, and affirm or deny, by a voluntary act, that which we do not distinctly apprehend. The properties of quantity, founded on our ideas of extension and number, are distinctly perceived by our minds; and hence the sciences of arithmetic and geometry are certainly true. But, when he turns his thoughts to the phenomena of external sensation, Descartes cannot wholly extricate himself from his original concession, the basis of his doubt, that the senses do sometimes deceive us. He endeavors to reconcile this with his own theory, which had built the certainty of all that we clearly hold certain on the perfect veracity of God.

His deductions from this.

92. It is in this inquiry that he reaches that important distinction between the primary and secondary properties of matter (the latter being modifications of the former, relative only to our apprehension, but not inherent in things), which, without being wholly new, contradicted the Aristotelian theories of the schools;<sup>1</sup> and he

Primary and secondary qualities.

It insinuates the clear and acute understanding of this celebrated philosopher, and appears to me an entire refutation of the scholastic argument of Descartes: one more fit for the Anselms and such dealers in words, from whom it came, than for himself.

<sup>1</sup> See Stewart's First Dissertation on the Progress of Philosophy. This writer has justly observed, that many persons conceive color to be inherent in the object, so that the existence of Reid on Descartes and his followers, as having pretended to discover what no one doubted, is at least unreasonable in this respect. A late writer has gone so far as to say, "Nothing at first may seem a more rational, obvious, and incontrovertible conclusion, than that the color of a body is an inherent quality, like its weight, hardness, &c.; and that to see the object, and to see it of its own

color, when nothing interferences between our eyes and it, are one and the same thing. Yet this is only a prejudice." &c. — Herschel's Discourse on Nat. Philos., p. 82. I almost even suspect that the notion of sounds and smells, being secondary or merely sensible qualities, is not distinct in all men's minds. But, after we become familiar with correct ideas, it is not easy to revive prejudices in our imagination. In the same page of Stewart's Dissertation, he has been led by dislike of the University of Oxford to misconceive, in an extraordinary manner, a passage of Addison in the Guardian, which is evidently a sportive ridicule of the Cartesian theory, and is absolutely inapplicable to the Aristotelian.

[The most remarkable circumstance in Reid's animadversion on Descartes, as having announced nothing but what was

remarked, that we are never, strictly speaking, deceived by our senses, but by the inferences which we draw from them.

93. Such is nearly the substance, exclusive of a great variety of more or less episodical theories, of the three metaphysical works of Descartes, the history of the soul's progress from opinion to doubt, and from doubt to certainty. Few would dispute, at the present day, that he has destroyed too much of his foundations to render his superstructure stable; and, to readers averse from metaphysical reflection, he must seem little else than an idle theorist, weaving cobwebs for pastime, which common sense sweeps away. It is fair, however, to observe that no one was more careful than Descartes to guard against any practical scepticism in the affairs of life. He even goes so far as to maintain, that a man, having adopted any practical opinion on such grounds as seem probable, should pursue it with as much steadiness as if it were founded on demonstration; observing, however, as a general rule, to choose the most moderate opinions among those which he should find current in his own country.<sup>1</sup>

94. The objections adduced against the *Meditations* are in a series of seven. The first are by a theologian named Caterus, the second by Mersenne, the third by Hobbes, the fourth by Arnauld, the fifth by Gassendi, the sixth by some anonymous writers, the seventh by a Jesuit of the name of Bourdin. To all of these, Descartes replied with spirit and acuteness. By far the most important controversy was with Gassendi, whose objections were stated

Objections  
made to his  
*Meditations*.

generally known, is that he had himself, in his inquiry into the Human Mind, contended very dogmatically in favor of the vulgar notion that secondary qualities exist in bodies, independently of sensation. "This scarlet rose, which is before me, is still a scarlet rose when I shut my eyes, and was so at midnight when no eye saw it. The color remains when the appearance ceases: it remains the same when the appearance changes."—Chap. vi. § 4. He even uses similar language as to perfumes, which, indeed, stand on the same ground, though we feel less of the prejudice in favor of their reality than of that of colors. Nothing can be more obvious than the reply: the color remains only on the tacit hypothesis that some one is looking at the object; at midnight we can hardly say that the rose is red, except by an additional hypothesis, that the day should break. "We never," he proceeds, "as far

as I can judge, give the name of color to the sensation, but to the quality only." How then do we talk of bright, dull, glaring, gay, dazzling colors? Do not these words refer to a sensation, rather than to a configuration of parts in the colored body, by which it reflects or refracts light? But this first production of *lâcheté*, though abounding with acute and original remarks, is too much disfigured by a tendency to halloo on the multitude against speculative philosophy. The appeal to common sense, that is, the crude notions of men who had never reflected, even enough to use language with precision, would have been fatal to psychology. Red afterwards laid aside the popular tone in writing on philosophy, though perhaps he was always too much inclined to cut knots when he could not untie them.—1347.]

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I. p. 147; vol. III. p. 66

more briefly, and, I think, with less skill, by Hobbes. It was the first trumpet in the new philosophy of an ancient war between the sensual and ideal schools of psychology. Descartes had revived, and placed in a clearer light, the doctrine of mind, as not absolutely dependent upon the senses, nor of the same nature as their objects. Stewart does not acknowledge him as the first teacher of the soul's immateriality. "That many of the schoolmen, and that the wisest of the ancient philosophers, when they described the mind as a spirit, or as a spark of celestial fire, employed these expressions, not with any intention to materialize its essence, but merely from want of more unexceptionable language, might be shown with demonstrative evidence, if this were the proper place for entering into the discussion."<sup>1</sup> But, though it cannot be said that Descartes was absolutely the first who maintained the strict immateriality of the soul, it is manifest to any one who has read his correspondence, that the tenet, instead of being general, as we are apt to presume, was by no means in accordance with the common opinion of his age. The fathers, with the exception, perhaps the single one, of Augustin, had taught the corporeity of the thinking substance. Arnauld seems to consider the doctrine of Descartes as almost a novelty in modern times. "What you have written concerning the distinction between the soul and body appears to me very clear, very evident, and quite divine; and, as nothing is older than truth, I have had singular pleasure to see that almost the same things have formerly been very perspicuously and agreeably handled by St. Augustin in all his tenth book on the Trinity, but chiefly in the tenth chapter."<sup>2</sup> But Arnauld himself, in his objections to the *Meditations*, had put it as at least questionable, whether that which thinks is not something extended, which, besides the usual properties of extended substances, such as mobility and figure, has also this particular virtue and power of thinking.<sup>3</sup> The reply of Descartes removed the difficulties of the illustrious Jansenist, who became an ardent and almost complete disciple of the new philosophy. In a placard against the Cartesian philosophy, printed in 1647, which seems to have come from Revius, professor of theology at Leyden, it is said, "As far as regards the nature of things, nothing seems to hinder but that the soul may be either a substance,

<sup>1</sup> Dissertation, *ut i. suprad.*<sup>2</sup> Descartes, II. 14.<sup>3</sup> Descartes, x. 128.

or a mode of corporeal substance."<sup>1</sup> And More, who had carried on a metaphysical correspondence with Descartes, whom he professed to admire, at least at that time, above all philosophers that had ever existed, without exception of his favorite Plato, extols him after his death in a letter to Clerse-lieu, as having best established the foundations of religion. "For the peripatetics," he says, "pretend that there are certain substantial forms emanating from matter, and so united to it that they cannot subsist without it, to which class these philosophers refer the souls of almost all living beings, even those to which they allow sensation and thought; while the Epicureans, on the other hand, who laugh at substantial forms, ascribe thought to matter itself, so that it is M. Descartes alone, of all philosophers, who has at once banished from philosophy all these substantial forms or souls derived from matter, and absolutely divested matter itself of the faculty of feeling and thinking."<sup>2</sup>

95. It must be owned, that the firm belief of Descartes in the immateriality of the Ego, or thinking principle, was accompanied with what in later times would have been deemed rather too great concessions to the materialists. He held the imagination and the memory to be portions of the brain, wherein the images of our sensations are bodily preserved; and even assigned such a motive force to the imagination, as to produce those involuntary actions which we often perform, and all the movements of brutes. "This explains how all the motions of all animals arise, though we grant them no knowledge of things, but only an imagination entirely corporeal, and how all those operations which do not require the concurrence of reason are produced in us." But the whole of his notions as to the con-

Theory of  
memory  
and imagi-  
nation.

<sup>1</sup> Descartes, x. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Descartes, x. 386. Even More seems to have been perplexed at one time by the difficulty of accounting for the knowledge and sentiment of disembodied souls, and almost inclined to admit their corporeity.

"J'aimerois mieux dire avec les Platoniciens, les anciens péres, et presque tous les philosophes, que les âmes humaines, tous les génies tant bons que mauvais, sont corporels, et que par conséquent ils ont un sentiment réel, c'est à dire, qui leur vient du corps dont ils sont revêtus." This is in a letter to Descartes in 1649, which I have not read in Latin (vol. x. p. 249). I do not quite understand whether he meant

only that the soul, when separated from the gross body, is invested with a substantial clothing, or that there is what we may call an interior body, a supposed monad, to which the thinking principle is indissolubly united. This is what all materialists mean, who have any clear notions whatever: it is a possible, perhaps a plausible, perhaps even a highly probable, hypothesis, but one which will not prove their theory. The former seems almost an indispensable supposition, if we admit sensibility to phenomena at all in the soul after death; but it is rather, perhaps, a theological than a metaphysical speculation.



nection of the soul and body, and indeed all his physiological theories of which he was most enamoured, do little credit to the Cartesian philosophy. They are among those portions of his creed which have lain most open to ridicule, and which it would be useless for us to detail. He seems to have expected more advantage to psychology from anatomical researches than in that state of the science, or even probably in any future state of it, anatomy could afford. When asked once where was his library, he replied, showing a calf he was dissecting, "This is my library."<sup>1</sup> His treatise on the passions, a subject so important in the philosophy of the human mind, is made up of crude hypotheses, or, at best, irrelevant observations, on their physical causes and concomitants.

96. It may be considered as a part of this syncretism, as we may call it, of the material and immaterial hypotheses, that Descartes fixed the seat of the soul in the conarion, or pineal gland, which he selected as the only part of the brain which is not double. By some means of communication which he did not profess to explain, though later metaphysicians have attempted to do so, the unextended intelligence, thus confined to a certain spot, receives the sensations which are immediately produced through impressions on the substance of the brain. If he did not solve the problem, be it remembered that the problem has never since been solved. It was objected by a nameless correspondent, who signs himself Hyperaspistes, that the soul, being incorporeal, could not leave by its operations a trace on the brain, which his theory seemed to imply. Descartes answered, in rather a remarkable passage, that, as to things purely intellectual, we do not, properly speaking, remember them at all, as they are equally original thoughts every time they present themselves to the mind, except that they are habitually joined as it were, and associated with certain names, which, being bodily, make us remember them.<sup>2</sup>

Seat of soul  
in pineal  
gland.

<sup>1</sup> Descartes was very fond of dissection: "C'est un exercice où je me suis souvent occupé depuis quinze ans, et je crois qu'il n'y a guère de médecins qui y aient regardé de si près que moi." — Vol. viii. p. 100, also pp. 173 and 180.

<sup>2</sup> This passage I must give in French, finding it obscure, and having translated more according to what I guess than literally. "Mais pour ce qui est des choses

purement intellectuelles à proprement parler on n'en a aucun souvenir: et la première fois qu'elles se présentent à l'esprit, on les pense aussi-bien que la seconde, et ce n'est peut-être qu'elles ont coutume d'être jointes et comme attachées à certains noms qui, étant corporels, font que nous nous souvenons aussi d'elles." — Vol. viii. p. 271.



97. If the orthodox of the age were not yet prepared for a doctrine which seemed so favorable at least to natural religion as the immateriality of the soul, it may be readily supposed, that Gassendi, like Hobbes, had imbibed too much of the Epicurean theory to acquiesce in the spiritualizing principles of his adversary. In a sportive style he addresses him. *O anima!* and Descartes, replying more angrily, retorts upon him the mine *O caro!* which he frequently repeats. Though we may lament such unhappy efforts at wit in these great men, the names do not ill represent the spiritual and carnal philosophies; the school that produced Leibnitz, Kant, and Stewart, contrasted with that of Hobbes, Condillac, and Cabanis.

98. It was a matter of course that the vulnerable passages of the six Meditations would not escape the spear of Superiority of Descartes. so skilful an antagonist as Gassendi. But many of his objections appear to be little more than cavils; and, upon the whole, Descartes leaves me with the impression of his great superiority in metaphysical acuteness. It was indeed impossible that men should agree who persisted in using a different definition of the important word *idea*; and the same source of interminable controversy has flowed ever since for their disciples. Gassendi, adopting the scholastic maxim, "Nothing is in the understanding, which has not been in the sense," carried it so much farther than those from whom it came, that he denied any thing to be an idea but what was imagined by the mind. Descartes repeatedly desired both him and Hobbes, whose philosophy was built on the same notion, to remark that he meant by "*idea*" whatever can be conceived by the understanding, though not capable of being represented by the imagination.<sup>1</sup> Thus we imagine

<sup>1</sup> "Par le nom d'idée, il veut seulement qu'on entende ici les images des choses matérielles dépeintes en la fantasia corporelle; et cela étant supposé, il lui est aisé de montrer qu'on ne peut avoir propre et véritable idée de Dieu ni d'un ange; mais j'ai souvent averti, et principalement en celui là même, que je prends le nom d'idée pour tout ce qui est conçu immédiatement par l'esprit; en sorte que, lorsque je veux et que je crains, parceque je conçois en même temps, que je veux et que je crains, ce vouloir et cette crainte sont mis par moi en nombre des idées; et je ne suis servi de ce mot, parcequ'il étoit déjà communé-

ment reçu par les philosophes pour signifier les formes des conceptions de l'entendement divin, encore que nous ne reconnoissons en Dieu aucune fantastie ou imagination corporelle, et je n'en avois point de plus propre. Et je pense avoir assez expliqué l'idée de Dieu pour ceux qui veulent concevoir les sens que je donne à mes paroles; mais pour ceux qui s'attachent à les entendre autrement que je ne fais, je ne le pourrais jamais assez."—Vol. i. p. 404. This is in answer to Hobbes; the objections of Hobbes, and Descartes' replies, turn very much on this primary difference between ideas as images, which alone our

a triangle, but we can only conceive a figure of a thousand sides: we know its existence, and can reason about its properties; but we have no image whatever in the mind, by which we can distinguish such a polygon from one of a smaller or greater number of sides. Hobbes, in answer to this, threw out a paradox which he has not, perhaps at least in so unlimited a manner, repeated, — that by reason, that is, by the process of reasoning, we can infer nothing as to the nature of things, but only as to their names.<sup>1</sup> It is singular that a man, conversant at least with the elements of geometry, should have fallen into this error. For it does not appear that he meant to speak only of natural substances, as to which his language might seem to be a bad expression of what was afterwards clearly shown by Locke. That the understanding can conceive and reason upon that which the imagination cannot delineate, is evident, not only from Descartes' instance of a polygon, but more strikingly by the whole theory of infinites, which are certainly somewhat more than bare words, whatever assistance words may give us in explaining them to others or to ourselves.<sup>2</sup>

99. Dugald Stewart has justly dwelt on the signal service rendered by Descartes to psychological philosophy, by turning the mental vision inward upon itself, and accustoming us to watch the operations of our intellect, which, though employed upon ideas obtained through the

Stewart's  
remarks on  
Descartes.

countryman could understand, and ideas as intellections, conceptions, *νοήματα*, incapable of being imagined, but not less certainly known and reasoned upon. The French is a translation, but made by Clerelier under the eye of Descartes, so that it may be quoted as an original.

"Que si nous nous maintenons si peu- être le raisonnement n'est rien autre chose qu'un assemblage et un enchaînement de noms par ce mot est." D'où il s'ensuivrait que par la raison nous ne concluons rien de tout touchant la nature des choses, mais seulement touchant leurs appellations, c'est à dire que par elle nous voyons simplement si nous assemblons bien ou mal les *noms* des choses, selon les conventions que nous avons faites à notre fantaisie touchant leurs significations." — p. 476. Descartes more fully answered: "L'assemblage qui se fait dans le raisonnement n'est pas celui des noms, mais bien celui des choses, signifiées par les noms; et je m'étonne que le contraire puisse venir en l'esprit de personne." Descartes treated Hobbes, whom he did not esteem, with less attention than

his other correspondents. Hobbes could not understand what have been called ideas of reflection, such as fear; and thought it was nothing more than the idea of the object feared. "For what else is the fear of a lion," he says, "than the idea of this lion, and the effect which it produces in the heart, which leads us to run away? But this running is not a thought; so that nothing of thought exists in fear but the idea of the object." Descartes only replied, "It is self-evident that it is not the same thing to see a lion and fear him, that it is to see him only." — p. 483.

<sup>2</sup> I suspect, from what I have since read, that Hobbes had a different, and what seems to me a very erroneous, view of infinite or infinitesimal quantities in geometry. For he answers the old sophism of Zeno, "Quicquid dividi potest in partes infinitas est infinitum," in a manner which does not meet the real truth of the case: "Dividi posse in partes infinitas nihil aliud est, quam dividi posse in partes quocunque quis velit." — *Logica sive Computatio*, c. 5 p. 88 (edit. 1807).

senses, are as distinguishable from them as the workman from his work. He has given, indeed, to Descartes a very proud title, Father of the experimental philosophy of the human mind, as if he were to man what Bacon was to nature.<sup>1</sup> By patient observation of what passed within him, by holding his soul, as it were, like an object in a microscope, which is the only process of a good metaphysician, he became habituated to throw away those integuments of sense which hide us from ourselves. Stewart has censured him for the paradox, as he calls it, that the *essence* of mind consists in thinking, and that of matter in extension. That the act of thinking is as inseparable from the mind as extension is from matter, cannot indeed, be proved; since, as our thoughts are successive, it is not inconceivable that there may be intervals of duration between them; but it can hardly be reckoned a paradox. But whoever should be led by the word "*essence*" to suppose that Descartes confounded the percipient thinking substance, the Ego, upon whose bosom, like that of the ocean, the waves of perception are raised by every breeze of sense, with the perception itself, or even, what is scarcely more tenable, with the reflective action, or thought; that he anticipated this strange paradox of Hume in his earliest work, from which he silently withdrew in his Essays, — would not only do great injustice to one of the acutest understandings that ever came to the subject, but overlook several clear assertions of the distinction, especially in his answer to Hobbes. "The thought,"

<sup>1</sup> Dissertation on Progress of Philosophy. The word "experiment" must be taken in the sense of observation. Stewart very early took up his admiration for Descartes. "He was the first philosopher who stated in a clear and satisfactory manner the distinction between mind and matter, and who pointed out the proper plan for studying the intellectual philosophy. It is chiefly in consequence of his precise ideas with respect to this distinction, that we may remark in all his metaphysical writings a perspicuity which is not observable in those of any of his predecessors." — Elem. of Philos. of Human Mind, vol. I. (published in 1792), note A. "When Descartes," he says in the dissertation before quoted, "established it as a general principle that nothing conceivable by the power of imagination could throw any light on the operations of thought, a principle which I consider as exclusively his own, he laid the foundations of the experimental philosophy of the human mind. That the same

truth had been previously perceived more or less distinctly by Bacon and others, appears probable from the general complexion of their speculations; but which of them has expressed it with equal precision, or laid it down as a fundamental maxim in their logic?" The words which I have put in Italics seem too vaguely and not very clearly expressed, nor am I aware that they are borne out in their literal sense by any position of Descartes; nor do I apprehend the allusion to Bacon. But it is certain that Descartes, and still more his disciples Arnauld and Malebranche, take better care to distinguish what can be imagined from what can be conceived or understood, than any of the school of Gassendi in this or other countries. One of the great merits of Descartes as a metaphysical writer, not unconnected with this, is that he is generally careful to avoid figurative language in speaking of mental operations: wherein he has much the advantage over Locke.

he says, "differs from that which thinks, as the mode from the substance."<sup>1</sup> And Stewart has in his earliest work justly corrected Reid in this point as to the Cartesian doctrine.<sup>2</sup>

100. Several singular positions, which have led to an undue depreciation of Descartes in general as a philosopher, occur in his metaphysical writings. Such was his denial of thought, and, as is commonly said, sensation, to brutes, which he seems to have founded on the mechanism of the bodily organs,—a cause sufficient, in his opinion, to explain all the phenomena of the motions of animals, and to obviate the difficulty of assigning to them immaterial souls;<sup>3</sup> his rejection of final causes in the explanation

Paradoxes  
of Des-  
cartes.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 470. Arnauld objected, in a letter to Descartes, "Comment se peut-il faire que la pensée constitue l'essence de l'esprit, puisque l'esprit est une substance, et que la pensée semble n'en être qu'un mode?" Descartes replied that thought in general, la pensée, ou la nature qui pense, in which he placed the essence of the soul, was very different from such or such particular acts of thinking. Vol. vi. pp. 163, 160.

<sup>2</sup> Philosophy of Human Mind, vol. I. note A. See the Principles, § 63.

<sup>3</sup> It is a common opinion that Descartes denied all life and sensibility to brutes; but this seems not so clear. "Il faut reconnaître," he says in a letter to More, where he has been arguing against the existence in brutes of any thinking principles, "que je parle de la pensée, non de la vie ou du sentiment: car je nôte la vie à aucun animal, ne la faisant consister que dans la seule chaleur du cœur. Je ne leur refuse pas même le sentiment autant qu'il dépend des organes du corps."—Vol. x. p. 208. In a longer passage, if he does not express himself very clearly, he admits *parfois* in brutes; and it seems impossible that he could have ascribed passions to what has no sensation. Much of what he here says is very good. "Bien que Montaigne et Charon aient dit, qu'il y a plus de différence d'homme à homme que d'homme à bête, il n'est toutefois jamais trouvé aucune bête si parfaite, qu'elle ait une de quelque signe pour faire entendre à d'autres animaux quelque chose qui n'est point de rapport à ses passions; et il n'y a point d'homme si imparfait qu'il n'en use; en sorte que ceux qui sont sourds et muets inventent des signes particuliers par lesquels ils expriment leurs pensées; ce qui me semble un très-fort argument pour prouver que ce qui fait que les bêtes ne parlent point comme nous, est qu'elles n'ont aucune pensée, et non point que les

organes leur manquent. Et on ne peut dire qu'elles parlent entre elles, mais que nous ne les entendons pas; car comme les chiens et quelques autres animaux nous expriment leurs passions, ils nous expriment aussi-bien leurs pensées s'ils en avoient. Je sais bien que les bêtes font beaucoup de choses mieux que nous, mais je ne m'en étonne pas; car cela même sert à prouver qu'elles agissent naturellement, et par ressorts, ainsi qu'un horloge: laquelle montre bien mieux l'heure qu'il est, que notre jugement nous l'enseigne. . . . On peut seulement dire que, bienque les bêtes ne fissent aucune action qui nous assure qu'elles pensent, toutefois, à cause que les organes de leurs corps ne sont pas fort différents des nôtres, on peut conjecturer qu'il y a quelque pensée jointe à ces organes, ainsi que nous expérimentons en nous, bienque la leur soit beaucoup moins parfaite; à quoi je n'ai rien à répondre, si non que si elles pensoient aussi que nous, elles auroient une âme immortelle aussi bien que nous; ce qui n'est pas vraisemblable, à cause qu'il n'y a point de raison pour le croire de quelques animaux, sans le croire de tous, et qu'il y en a plusieurs trop imparfaits pour pouvoir croire cela d'eux, comme sont les huîtres, les sponges, &c."—Vol. ix. p. 425. I do not see the meaning of *une âme immortelle* in the last sentence: if the words had been *une âme immatérielle*, it would be to the purpose. More, in a letter to which this is a reply, had argued as if Descartes took brutes for insensible machines, and combats the paradox with the arguments which common sense furnishes. He would even have preferred ascribing immortality to them, as many ancient philosophers did. But surely Descartes, who did not acknowledge any proofs of the immortality of the human soul to be valid, except those founded on revelation, needed not to trouble himself much about this difficulty.



of nature as far above our comprehension, and unnecessary to those who had the internal proof of God's existence; his still more paradoxical tenet, that the truth of geometrical theorems, and every other axiom of intuitive certainty, depended upon the will of God; a notion that seems to be a relic of his original scepticism, but which he pertinaciously defends throughout his letters.<sup>1</sup> From remarkable errors, men of original and independent genius are rarely exempt: Descartes had pulled down an edifice constructed by the labors of near two thousand years, with great reason in many respects, yet perhaps with too unlimited a disregard of his predecessors; it was his destiny, as it had been theirs, to be sometimes refuted and depreciated in his turn. But the single fact of his having first established, both in philosophical and popular belief, the proper immateriality of the soul, were we even to forget the other great accessions which he made to psychology, would declare the influence he has had on human opinion. From this immateriality, however, he did not derive the tenet of its immortality. He was justly contented to say, that, from the intrinsic difference between mind and body, the dissolution of the one could not necessarily take away the existence of the other, but that it was for God to determine whether it should continue to exist; and this determination, as he thought, could only be learned from his revealed will. The more powerful arguments, according to general apprehension, which reason affords for the sentient being of the soul after death, did not belong to the metaphysical philosophy of Descartes, and would never have been very satisfactory to his mind. He says, in one of his letters, that, "laying aside what faith assures us of, he owns that it is more easy to make conjectures for our own advantage, and entertain promising hopes, than to feel any confidence in their accomplishment."<sup>2</sup>

101. Descartes was perhaps the first who saw that definitions of words, already as clear as they can be made, are nugatory or impracticable. This alone would distinguish his philosophy from that of the Aristotelians, who had wearied and confused themselves for twenty

<sup>1</sup> "C'est en effet parler de Dieu comme d'un Jupiter ou d'un Saturne, et l'assujettir au Styx et aux destinées, que de dire que ces vérités sont indépendantes de lui. Ne craignez point, je vous prie, d'assurer et de publier partout que c'est Dieu qui a

établi ces lois en la nature; ainsi qu'un roi établit les lois en son royaume." — Vol. vi. p. 109. He argues as strenuously the same point in p. 132 and p. 307.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ix. p. 380.



centuries with unintelligible endeavors to grasp by definition what refuses to be defined. "Mr. Locke," says Stewart, "claims this improvement as entirely his own; but the merit of it unquestionably belongs to Descartes, although it must be owned that he has not always sufficiently attended to it in his researches."<sup>1</sup> A still more decisive passage to this effect than that referred to by Stewart in the *Principia* will be found in the posthumous dialogue on the Search after Truth. It is objected by one of the interlocutors, as it had actually been by Gassendi, that, to prove his existence by the act of thinking, he should first know what existence and what thought is. "I agree with you," the representative of Descartes replies, "that it is necessary to know what doubt is, and what thought is, before we can be fully persuaded of this reasoning—I doubt, therefore I am—or, what is the same—I think, therefore I am. But do not imagine that for this purpose you must torture your mind to find out the next genus, or the essential differences, as the logicians talk, and so compose a regular definition. Leave this to such as teach or dispute in the schools. But whoever will examine things by himself, and judge of them according to his understanding, cannot be so senseless as not to see clearly, when he pays attention, what doubting, thinking, being, are, or to have any need to learn their distinctions. Besides, there are things which we render more obscure in attempting to define them, because, as they are very simple and very clear, we cannot know and comprehend them better than by themselves. And it should be reckoned among the chief errors that can be committed in science for men to fancy that they can define that

<sup>1</sup> *Dissertation, ubi supra.* Stewart, in his *Philosophical Essays*, note A, had censured Reid for assigning this remark to Descartes and Locke, but without giving any better reason than that it is found in a work written by Lord Stair; earlier, certainly, than Locke, but not before Descartes. It may be doubtful, as we shall see hereafter, whether Locke has not gone beyond Descartes, or at least distinguished undefinable words more strictly.

[Sir William Hamilton remarks on this passage, where Reid assigns the observation to Descartes and Locke: "This is incorrect. Descartes has little, and Locke no praise for this observation. It had been made by Aristotle, and after him by many others; while, subsequently to Des-

cartes, and previous to Locke, Pascal and the Port-Royal logicians, to say nothing of a paper of Leibnitz in 1684, had reduced it to a matter of commonplace. In this instance, Locke can indeed be proved a borrower."—Hamilton's edition of Reid, p. 220. But this very learned writer quotes no passage from Aristotle to this effect; and certainly the practice of that philosopher and his followers was to attempt definitions of every thing. Nor could Aristotle, or even Descartes, have distinguished undefinable words by their expressing simple ideas of sense or reflection, as Locke has done, when they have not made that classification of ideas into simple and complex, which forms so remarkable a part of his philosophy—1847.]

which they can only conceive, and distinguish what is clear in it from what is obscure, while they do not see the difference between that which must be defined before it is understood, and that which can be fully known by itself. Now, among things which can thus be clearly known by themselves, we must put doubting, thinking, being. For I do not believe any one ever existed so stupid as to need to know what being is before he could affirm that he is; and it is the same of thought and doubt. Nor can he learn these things except by himself, nor be convinced of them but by his own experience, and by that consciousness and inward witness which every man finds in himself when he examines the subject. And as we should define whiteness in vain to a man who can see nothing, while one who can open his eyes and see a white object requires no more, so to know what doubting is, and what thinking is, it is only necessary to doubt and to think."<sup>1</sup> Nothing could more tend to cut short the verbal cavils of the schoolmen, than this limitation of their favorite exercise,—definition. It is due, therefore, to Descartes, so often accused of appropriating the discoveries of others, that we should establish his right to one of the most important that the new logic has to boast.

102. He seems, at one moment, to have been on the point of taking another step very far in advance of his age. "Let us take," he says, "a piece of wax from the honeycomb; it retains some taste and smell; it is hard; it is cold; it has a very marked color, form, and size. Approach it to the fire; it becomes liquid, warm, inodorous, tasteless; its form and color are changed, its size is increased. Does the same wax remain after these changes? It must be allowed that it does: no one doubts it, no one thinks otherwise. What was it, then, that we so distinctly knew to exist in this piece of wax? Nothing certainly that we observed by the senses, since all that the taste, the smell, the sight, the touch, reported to us has disappeared, and still the same wax remains." This something which endures under every change of sensible qualities cannot be imagined; for the imagination must represent some of these qualities, and none of them are essential to the thing: it can only be conceived by the understanding.<sup>2</sup>

103. It may seem almost surprising to us, after the writings

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xi. p. 369.

<sup>2</sup> Méditation Seconde, l. 266.

of Locke and his followers on the one hand, and the chemist with his crucible on the other, have chased these abstract substances of material objects from their sanctuaries, that a man of such prodigious acuteness and intense reflection as Descartes should not have remarked that the identity of wax after its liquefaction is merely nominal, and depending on arbitrary language, which in many cases gives new appellations to the same aggregation of particles after a change of their sensible qualities; and that all we call substances are but aggregates of resisting invariable corpuscles, which, by the laws of nature, are capable of affecting our senses differently, according to the combinations they may enter into, and the changes they may successively undergo. But if he had distinctly seen this, which I do not apprehend that he did, it is not likely that he would have divulged the discovery. He had already given alarm to the jealous spirit of orthodoxy by what now appears to many so self-evident, that they have treated the supposed paradox as a trifling with words,—the doctrine that color, heat, smell, and other secondary qualities, or accidents of bodies, do not exist in them, but in our own minds, and are the effects of their intrinsic or primary qualities. It was the tenet of the schools, that these were sensible realities, inherent in bodies; and the church held as an article of faith, that, the substance of bread being withdrawn from the consecrated wafer, the accidents of that substance remained as before, but independent, and not inherent in any other. Arnauld raised this objection, which Descartes endeavored to repel by a new theory of transubstantiation; but it always left a shade of suspicion, in the Catholic Church of Rome, on the orthodoxy of Cartesianism.

104. "The paramount and indisputable authority, which, in all our reasonings concerning the human mind, he ascribes to the evidence of consciousness," is reckoned by Stewart among the great merits of Descartes. It is certain that there are truths which we know, as it is called, intuitively; that is, by the mind's immediate inward glance. And reasoning would be interminable, if it did not find its ultimate limit in truths which it cannot prove. Gassendi imputed to Descartes, that, in his fundamental enthymeme, "*Cogito, ergo sum*," he supposed a knowledge of the major premise, "*Quod cogitat, est*." But Descartes replied that it was a great error to believe that our

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knowledge of particular propositions must always be deduced from universals, according to the rules of logic; whereas, on the contrary, it is by means of our knowledge of particulars that we ascend to generals, though it is true that we descend again from them to infer other particular propositions.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that Gassendi did not make this objection very seriously.

105. Thus the logic of Descartes, using that word for principles that guide our reasoning, was an instrument of defence both against the captiousness of ordinary scepticism, that of the Pyrrhonic school, and against the disputatious dogmatism of those who professed to serve under the banner of Aristotle. He who reposes on his own consciousness, or who recurs to first principles of intuitive knowledge, though he cannot be said to silence his adversary, should have the good sense to be silent himself; which puts equally an end to debate. But, so far as we are concerned with the investigation of truth, the Cartesian appeal to our own consciousness, of which Stewart was very fond, just as it is in principle, *may* end in an assumption of our own prejudices as the standard of belief. Nothing can be truly self-evident but that which a clear, an honest, and an experienced understanding in another man acknowledges to be so.

106. Descartes has left a treatise highly valuable, but not very much known, on the art of logic, or rules for the conduct of the understanding.<sup>2</sup> Once only, in a letter, he has

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II. p. 305. See, too, the passage, quoted above, in his posthumous dialogue.

[Perhaps the best answer might have been, that "*Cogito, ergo sum*," though thrown into the form of an enthymeme, was not meant so much for a logical inference, as an assertion of consciousness. It has been observed, that *cogito* is equivalent to *sum cogitans*, and involves the conclusion. It is impossible to employ rules of logic upon operations of the mind which are anterior to all reasoning.—1847.]

<sup>2</sup> M. Cousin has translated and republished two works of Descartes, which had only appeared in *Opera Posthuma* (artesi), Amsterdam, 1701. Their authenticity, from external and intrinsic proofs, is out of question. One of these is that mentioned in the text, entitled *Rules for the Direction of the Understanding*; which, though logical in its subject, takes most of its illustrations from mathematics. The other is a dialogue, left imperfect, in which

he sustains the metaphysical principles of his philosophy. Of these two little tracts their editor has said, "that they equal in vigor and perhaps surpass in arrangement the *Meditations*, and *Discourse on Method*. We see in these more unequivocally the main object of Descartes, and the spirit of the revolution which has created modern philosophy, and placed in the understanding itself the principle of all certainty, the point of departure for all legitimate inquiry. They might seem written but yesterday, and for the present age."—

Vol. XI., preface, p. i. I may add to this, that I consider the *Rules for the Direction of the Understanding* as one of the best works on logic (in the enlarged sense) which I have ever read: more practically useful, perhaps, to young students, than the *Novum Organum*: and though, as I have said, his illustrations are chiefly mathematical, most of his rules are applicable to the general discipline of the reasoning powers. It occupies little more



alluded to the name of Bacon.<sup>1</sup> There are, perhaps, a few passages in this short tract that remind us of the *Treatise on Novum Organum*. But I do not know that the coincidence is such as to warrant a suspicion that he was indebted to it: we may reckon it rather a parallel than a derivative logic; written in the same spirit of cautious, inductive procedure, less brilliant and original in its inventions, but of more general application, than the *Novum Organum*, which is with some difficulty extended beyond the province of natural philosophy. Descartes is as averse as Bacon to syllogistic forms. "Truth," he says, "often escapes from these fetters, in which those who employ them remain entangled. This is less frequently the case with those who make no use of logic; experience showing that the most subtle of sophisms cheat none but sophists themselves, not those who trust to their natural reason. And, to convince ourselves how little this syllogistic art serves towards the discovery of truth, we may remark that the logicians can form no syllogism with a true conclusion, unless they are already acquainted with the truth that the syllogism develops. Hence it follows that the vulgar logic is wholly useless to him who would discover truth for himself, though it may assist in explaining to others the truth he already knows, and that it would be better to transfer it as a science from philosophy to rhetoric."<sup>2</sup>

107. It would occupy too much space to point out the many profound and striking thoughts which this *Merits of treatise on the conduct of the understanding, and his writings*. indeed most of the writings of Descartes, contain. "The greater part of the questions on which the learned dispute are but questions of words. These occur so frequently, that, if philosophers would agree on the signification of their words, scarce any of their controversies would remain." This has been continually said since; but it is a proof of some progress in wisdom, when the original thought of one age becomes the truism of the next. No one had been so much on his guard against the equivocation of words, or knew so well their relation to the operations of the mind. And it may be

than one hundred pages; and I think that I am doing a service in recommending it. Many of the rules will, of course, be found in later books; some, possibly, in earlier. This tract, as well as the dialogue which follows it, is incomplete; a portion being probably lost.

<sup>1</sup> "Si quelqu'un de cette humeur vouloit entreprendre d'écrire l'Histoire des apparences célestes selon la méthode de Verulamius."—Vol. vi. p. 210

<sup>2</sup> Vol. xi. p. 255.

said generally, though not without exception, of the metaphysical writings of Descartes, that we find in them a perspicuity which springs from his unremitting attention to the logical process of inquiry, admitting no doubtful or ambiguous position, and never requiring from his reader a deference to any authority but that of demonstration. It is a great advantage, in reading such writers, that we are able to discern when they are manifestly in the wrong. The sophisms of Plato, of Aristotle, of the schoolmen, and of a great many recent metaphysicians, are disguised by their obscurity; and, while they creep insidiously into the mind of the reader, are always denied and explained away by partial disciples.

168. Stewart has praised Descartes for having recourse to the evidence of consciousness in order to prove the liberty of the will. But he omits to tell us, that the notions entertained by this philosopher were not such as have been generally thought compatible with free agency in the only sense that admits of controversy. It was an essential part of the theory of Descartes, that God is the cause of all human actions. "Before God sent us into the world," he says in a letter, "he knew exactly what all the inclinations of our will would be; it is he that has implanted them in us; it is he also that has disposed all other things, so that such or such objects should present themselves to us at such or such times, by means of which he has known that our free-will would determine us to such or such actions, and he has willed that it should be so; but he has not willed to compel us thereto."<sup>1</sup> "We could not demonstrate," he says at another time, "that God exists, except by considering him as a being absolutely perfect; and he could not be absolutely perfect, if there could happen any thing in the world which did not spring entirely from him. . . . Mere philosophy is enough to make us know that there cannot enter the least thought into the mind of man, but God must will and have willed from all eternity that it should enter there." This is in a letter to his highly intelligent friend, the Princess Palatine Elizabeth, grand-daughter of James I.; and he proceeds to declare himself strongly in favor of predestination, denying wholly any particular providence, to which she had alluded, as changing the decrees of God, and all efficacy of prayer, except as one link in the chain of his determinations

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ix. p. 374.

<sup>2</sup> Id., p. 266.

Descartes, therefore, whatever some of his disciples may have become, was far enough from an Arminian theology. "As to free-will," he says elsewhere, "I own that, thinking only of ourselves, we cannot but reckon it independent; but, when we think of the infinite power of God, we cannot but believe that all things depend on him, and that consequently our free-will must do so too. . . . But, since our knowledge of the existence of God should not hinder us from being assured of our free-will, because we feel, and are conscious of it in ourselves, so that of our free-will should not make us doubt of the existence of God. For the independence which we experience and feel in ourselves, and which is sufficient to make our actions praiseworthy or blamable, is not incompatible with a dependence of another nature, according to which all things are subject to God."<sup>1</sup>

109. A system so novel, so attractive to the imagination by its bold and brilliant paradoxes, as that of Descartes, could not but excite the attention of an age already roused to the desire of a new philosophy, and to the scorn of ancient authority. His first treatises appeared in French; and, though he afterwards employed Latin, his works were very soon translated by his disciples, and under his own care. He wrote in Latin with great perspicuity; in French with liveliness and elegance. His mathematical and optical writings gave him a reputation which envy could not take away, and secured his philosophy from that general ridicule which sometimes overwhelms an obscure author. His very enemies, numerous and vehement as they were, served to enhance the celebrity of the Cartesian system, which he seems to have anticipated by publishing their objections to his *Meditations* with his own replies. In the universities, bigoted for the most part to Aristotelian authority, he had no chance of public reception; but the influence of the universities was much diminished in France, and a new theory had perhaps better chances in its favor on account of their opposition. But the Jesuits, a more powerful body, were, in general, adverse to the Cartesian system, and especially some time afterwards, when it was supposed to have the countenance of several leading Jansenists. The

Fame of his system, and attacks upon it.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ix. p. 308. This had originally been stated in the *Principia* with less confidence; the free-will of man and pre-

determination of God being both asserted as true, but their co-existence incomprehensible. Vol. iii. p. 86

Epicurean school, led by Gassendi and Hobbes, presented a formidable phalanx; since it in fact comprehended the wits of the world, the men of indolence and sensuality, quick to discern the many weaknesses of Cartesianism, with no capacity for its excellences. It is unnecessary to say how predominant this class was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, both in France and England.

110. Descartes was evidently in considerable alarm lest the Controversy church should bear with its weight upon his philosophy.<sup>1</sup> He had the censure on Galileo before his eyes, and certainly used some chicane of words as to the earth's movement upon this account. It was, however, in the Protestant country which he had chosen as his harbor of refuge that he was doomed to encounter the roughest storm. Gisbert Voet, an eminent theologian in the University of Utrecht, and the head of the party in the Church of Holland, which had been victorious in the Synod of Dort, attacked Descartes with all the virulence and bigotry characteristic of his school of divinity. The famous demonstration of the being of God he asserted to be a cover for atheism, and thus excited a flame of controversy; Descartes being not without supporters in the university, especially Regius, professor of medicine. The philosopher was induced by these assaults to change his residence from a town in the province of Utrecht to Leyden. Voet did not cease to pursue him with outrageous calumny, and succeeded in obtaining decrees of the senate and University of Utrecht, which interdicted Regius from teaching that "new and unproved (*presumpta*) philosophy" to his pupils. The war of libels on the Voetian side did not cease for some years, and Descartes replied with no small acrimony against Voet himself. The latter had recourse to the civil power, and instituted a prosecution against Descartes, which was quashed by the interference of the Prince of Orange. But many in the University of Leyden, under the influence of a notable theologian of that age, named Triglandius, one of the stoutest champions of Dutch orthodoxy, raised a cry against the Cartesian philosophy as

<sup>1</sup> "On a tellement assujéti la théologie à Aristote, qu'il est impossible d'expliquer une autre philosophie qu'il ne semble d'abord qu'elle soit contre la foi. Et après du ceci, je vous prie de me mander s'il n'y a rien de déterminé en la 24

bouchant l'étendue du monde: savoir s'il est fini ou plutôt infini, et si tout ce qu'on appelle espaces imaginaires soient des corps créés et véritables."—Vol. et. p. 78.

being favorable to Pelagianism and Popery, the worst names that could be given in Holland; and it was again through the protection of the Prince of Orange that he escaped a public censure. Regius, the most zealous of his original advocates, began to swerve from the fidelity of a sworn disciple, and published a book containing some theories of his own, which Descartes thought himself obliged to disavow. Ultimately he found, like many benefactors of mankind, that he had purchased reputation at the cost of peace; and, after some visits to France, where, probably from the same cause, he never designed to settle, found an honorable asylum and a premature death at the court of Christina. He died in 1651, having worked a more important change in speculative philosophy than any who had preceded him since the revival of learning; for there could be no comparison in that age between the celebrity and effect of his writings and those of Lord Bacon.<sup>1</sup>

111. The prejudice against Descartes, especially in his own country, was aggravated by his indiscreet and not <sup>Charges of</sup> very warrantable assumption of perfect originality.<sup>2</sup> <sup>plagiarism.</sup> No one, I think, can fairly refuse to own, that the Cartesian metaphysics, taken in their consecutive arrangement, form truly an original system; and it would be equally unjust to deny the splendid discoveries he developed in algebra and optics. But, upon every one subject which Descartes treated, he has not escaped the charge of plagiarism: professing always to be ignorant of what had been done by others, he falls perpetually into their track; more, as his adversaries maintained, than the chances of coincidence could fairly ex-

<sup>1</sup> The life of Descartes was written, very fully and with the warmth of a disciple, by Baillet, in two volumes quarto, 1691, of which he afterwards published an abridgement. In this, we find at length the attacks made on him by the Voetian theologians. Brucker has given a long and valuable account of the Cartesian philosophy, but not favorable, and perhaps not quite fair. Vol. v. pp. 230-334. Buhle is, as usual, much inferior to Brucker. But those who omit the mathematical portion will not find the original works of Descartes very long; and they are well worthy of being read.

<sup>2</sup> "I confess," he says in his *Logic*, "that I was born with such a temper, that the chief pleasure I find in study is, not from hearing the arguments of others, but by

inventing my own. This disposition alone impelled me in youth to the study of science: hence, whenever a new book promised by its title some new discovery, before sitting down to read it, I used to try whether my own natural sagacity could lead me to any thing of the kind; and I took care not to lose this innocent pleasure by too hasty a perusal. This answered so often, that I at length perceived that I arrived at truth, not as other men do, after blind and precarious guesses, by good luck rather than skill; but that long experience had taught me certain fixed rules, which were of surprising utility, and of which I afterwards made use to discover more truths."—Vol. xi. p. 262.



plain. Leibnitz has summed up the claims of earlier writers to the pretended discoveries of Descartes; and certainly it is a pretty long bill to be presented to any author. I shall insert this passage in a note, though much of it has no reference to this portion of the Cartesian philosophy.<sup>1</sup> It may perhaps be thought by candid minds, that we cannot apply the doctrine of chances to coincidence of reasoning in men of acute and inquisitive spirits, as fairly as we may to that of style or imagery; but, if we hold strictly that the old writer may claim the exclusive praise of a philosophical discovery, we must regret to see such a multitude of feathers plucked from the wing of an eagle.

<sup>1</sup> "Dogmata ejus metaphysica, velut circa ideas a sensibus remotas, et animæ distinctionem a corpore, et fluxum per ætherum materialium fidem, prorsus Platonice sunt. Argumentum pro existentia Dei, ex eo, quod ens perfectissimum, vel quo majus intelligi non potest, existentiam includit, fuit Anselmi, et in libro 'Contra insipientem' Inscripto extat inter ejus opera, pæssimque a scholasticis examinatur. In doctrina de continuo, pleno et loco Aristotelis noster secutus est, Ethicorum in re moralis penitus expressit, Porphyrii et apud in saltibus omnia libant. In explicatione rerum mechanica Leveipsum et Democritum præcunctos habuit qui et vortices ipsos jam docuerant. Jordanus Brunus eisdem fere de magnitudine universi ideas habuisse dicitur, quemadmodum et notavit V. CC. Stephanus Spietstus, ut de Gilberto nō dicam, cujus magneticæ considerationes tum per se, tum ad systema universi applicatas, Cartesio plurimum profuerunt. Explicationem gravitatis per materiam solidioris rejectionem in tangentem, quod in physica Cartesiana prope pulcherrimum est, didicit ex Kepler, qui similitudine palæarum motu aquæ in vase exstantis ad centrum contraxerunt rem explicuit primum. Actionem lucis in distant, similitudine baculi pressi jam veteres adumbraverunt. Circa iridem a M. Antonio de Dominis non parum lucis accepit. Keplerum fuisse primum suum in dioptrica magistrum, et in eo argumenta omnes ante se mortales longo intervallo antegressum, fatetur Cartesius in epistolis familiaribus; nam in scriptis, quæ ipse edidit, longè hæret a tali confessione aut lucis: tamen illa ratio, quæ rationum directionem explicat, ex compositione aliarum duplicis conatû perpendicularis ad superficiem et ad eandem paralleli, diserte apud Keplerum extat, qui eodem, ut Cartesius, modo æqualitatem angulorum incidentiæ et reflexionis lucis deducit

Idque gratam mentionem ideo merebatur, quod omnis præcipue Cartesii ratiocinatio hinc sumitur principio. Legem refractionis primum invenisse Willebroodum Snellium, Isaacus Vossius patet, quamquam non ideo negare ausim, Cartesium in eadem incidere potuisse de suo. Negavit in epistolis Victum sibi lectum, sed Thome Harrioti Angli libros analyticos posthumo anno 1631 editos vidisse multum vix dubitant; usque adeo mirum est eorum consensum cum calculo geometria Cartesiana. Sane jam Harriotus æquationem ulullo æqualem posuit, et hinc derivavit, quomodo oritur æquatio ex multiplicatione radicum in se invicem, et quomodo radicum auctione, diminutione, multiplicatione aut divisione variari æquatio possit, et quomodo prævide natura, et constitutio æquationum et radicum cognosci possit ex terminorum habitudine. Itaque narrat celeberrimus Wallisus, Robervalum, qui militem erat, vnde Cartesio in mentem venisset palmarium illud, æquationem ponere æqualem ulullo ad instar unius quantitatis, ostendo sibi a Domino de Cavendish libro Harrioti exclamasse, 'Hic vult ille vult' vidit, vidit. Reductionem quadrato-quadrato æquationis ad cubicam superiori jam æquulo invenit Ludovicus Ferrarius, cujus vitam reliquit Cartesius ejus familiaris. Denique fuit Cartesius, ut a viri-doctis dudum notatum est, et ex epistolis nūmum apparet, immodicus contemptor aliorum, et famæ cupiditate ad artifices non abstinentia, quæ parum generosa videri possunt. Atque hæc profecto non ideo animo obtruncandi viro, quem miraris æquum, sed eo consilio, ut cuique suum tribuatur, nec unus omnium laudes absorbeat: justissimum enim est, ut inventoriis suis honores constet, nec subtilis virtutum præmiis præclara sciendi studium refrigeret."—Leibnitz, apud Brucker, v. 265.

112. The name of Descartes as a great metaphysical writer has revived, in some measure, of late years: and this has been chiefly owing, among ourselves, to Dugald Stewart; in France, to the growing disposition of their philosophers to cast away their idols of the eighteenth century. "I am disposed," says our Scottish philosopher, "to date the origin of the true philosophy of mind from the *Principia* (why not the earlier works?) of Descartes, rather than from the *Organum* of Bacon, or the *Essays* of Locke; without, however, meaning to compare the French author with our two countrymen, either as a contributor to our stock of *facts* relating to the intellectual phenomena, or as the author of any important conclusion concerning the general laws to which they may be referred." The excellent edition by M. Cousin, in which alone the entire works of Descartes can be found, is a homage that France has recently offered to his memory, and an important contribution to the endious both of metaphysical and mathematical philosophy. I have made use of no other, though it might be desirable for the inquirer to have the Latin original at his side, especially in those works which had not been seen in French by their author.

#### SECTION IV.

##### On the Metaphysical Philosophy of Hobbes.

113. THE metaphysical philosophy of Hobbes was promulgated in his treatise on Human Nature, which appeared in 1650. This, with his other works, *De Cive* and *De Corpore Politico*, were fused into that great and general system, which he published in 1651, with the title of *Leviathan*. The first part of the *Leviathan*, "Of Man," follows the several chapters of the treatise on Human Nature with much regularity; but so numerous are the enlargements or omissions, so many are the variations with which the author has expressed the same positions, that they should much rather be considered as two works, than as two editions of the same. They differ more than Lord Bacon's

treatise, *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, does from his *Advancement of Learning*. I shall, however, blend the two in a single analysis; and this I shall generally give, as far as is possible, consistently with my own limits, in the very words of Hobbes. His language is so lucid and concise, that it would be almost as improper to put an algebraical process in different terms as some of his metaphysical paragraphs. But, as a certain degree of abridgment cannot be dispensed with, the reader must not take it for granted, even where inverted commas denote a closer attention to the text, that nothing is omitted, although, in such cases, I never hold it permissible to make any change.

114. All single thoughts, it is the primary tenet of Hobbes, are representations or appearances of some quality of a body without us, which is commonly called an object. "There is no conception in a man's mind, which hath not at first totally, or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense. The rest are derived from that original."<sup>1</sup> In the treatise on *Human Nature*, he dwells long on the immediate causes of sensation; and if no alteration had been made in his manuscript since he wrote his dedication to the Earl of Newcastle, in 1640, he must be owned to have anticipated Descartes in one of his most celebrated doctrines. "Because the image in vision, consisting in color and shape, is the knowledge we have of the qualities

His theory  
of sensation  
Coincident  
with Des-  
cartes.

of the object of that sense, it is no hard matter for a man to fall into this opinion, that the same color and shape are the very qualities themselves; and for the same cause, that sound and noise are the qualities of the bell, or of the air. And this opinion hath been so long received, that the contrary must needs appear a great paradox; and yet the introduction of species visible and intelligible (which is necessary for the maintenance of that opinion), passing to and fro from the object, is worse than any paradox, as being a plain impossibility. I shall, therefore, endeavor to make plain these points: 1. That the subject wherein color and image are inherent is not the object or thing seen. 2. That there is nothing without us (really) which we call an image or color. 3. That the said image or color is but an apposition unto us of the motion, agitation, or alteration, which the object worketh in the brain or spirits, or some external substance of the head.

<sup>1</sup> *Leviathan*, c. 1.

4. That, as in vision, so also in conceptions that arise from the other senses, the subject of their inherence is not the object, but the sentient."<sup>1</sup> And this he goes on to prove. Nothing of this will be found in the *Discours sur la Méthode*, the only work of Descartes then published; and, even if we believe Hobbes to have interpolated this chapter after he had read the *Meditations*, he has stated the principle so clearly, and illustrated it so copiously, that, so far especially as Locke and the English metaphysicians took it up, we may almost reckon him another original source.

115. The second chapter of the *Leviathan*, "On Imagination," begins with one of those acute and original observations we often find in Hobbes: "That when a thing lies still, unless somewhat else stir it, it will lie still for ever, is a truth that no man doubts of. But that when a thing is in motion, it will eternally be in motion, unless somewhat stay it, though the reason be the same, namely, that nothing can change itself, is not so easily assented to. For men measure, not only other men, but all other things, by themselves; and, because they find themselves subject after motion to pain and lassitude, think every thing else grows weary of motion and seeks repose of its own accord." The physical principle had lately been established; but the reason here given for the contrary prejudice, though not the sole one, is ingenious, and even true. Imagination he defines to be "conception remaining, and by little and little decaying after the act of sense."<sup>2</sup> This he afterwards expressed less happily, "the gradual decline of the motion in which sense consists;" his phraseology becoming more and more tinctured with the materialism which he affected in all his philosophy. Neither definition seems at all applicable to the imagination which calls up long past perceptions. "This decaying sense, when we would express the thing itself (I mean fancy itself), we call imagination; but when we would express the decay, and signify that the sense is fading, old, and past, it is called memory. So that imagination and memory are but one thing, which for divers considerations hath divers names."<sup>3</sup> It is, however, evident that imagination and memory are distinguished by something more than their names." The second fundamental error of Hobbes in his metaphysics, his extravagant nominalism, if so it should be called, appears in this

Imagination  
and  
memory.

<sup>1</sup> *Elem. Nat.*, c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Lev.*, c. 2.



sentence, as the first, his materialism, does in that previously quoted.

116. The phenomena of dreaming and the phantasms of waking men are considered in this chapter with the keen observation and cool reason of Hobbes.<sup>1</sup> I am not sure that he has gone more profoundly into psychological speculations in the *Leviathan* than in the earlier treatise; but it bears witness more frequently to what had probably been the growth of the intervening period,—a proneness to political and religious allusion, to magnify civil and to depreciate ecclesiastical power. “If this superstitious fear of spirits were taken away, and, with it, prognostics from dreams, false prophecies and many other things depending thereon, by which crafty and ambitious persons abuse the simple people, men would be much more fitted than they are for civil obedience. And this ought to be the work of the schools; but they rather nourish such doctrine.”<sup>2</sup>

117. The fourth chapter on Human Nature, and the corresponding third chapter of the *Leviathan*, entitled “On Discourse, or the Consequence and Train of Imagination,” are among the most remarkable in Hobbes, as they contain the elements of that theory of association, which was slightly touched afterwards by Locke, but developed and pushed to a far greater extent by Hartley. “The cause,” he says, “of the coherence or consequence of one conception to another is their first coherence or consequence at that time when they are produced by sense: as for instance, from St. Andrew the mind runneth to St. Peter, because their names are read together; from St. Peter to a stone, from the same cause; from stone to foundation, because we see them together; and, for the same cause, from foundation to church, and from church to people, and from people to tumult; and, according to this example, the mind may run almost from any thing to any thing.”<sup>3</sup> This he illustrates in the *Leviathan* by the well-known anecdote of a question suddenly put by one, in conversation about the death of Charles I., “What was the value of a Roman penny?” Of this *discourse*, as he calls it, in a larger sense of the word than is usual with the logicians, he mentions several kinds; and after observing that the remembrance of succession of one thing to another, that is, of what was antecedent and what

Discourse  
or train of  
Imagination.

<sup>1</sup> *Hum Nat.*, c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, c. 4, § 2.



consequent and what concomitant, is called an experiment, adds, that "to have had many experiments is what we call experience, which is nothing else but remembrance of what antecedents have been followed by what consequents."<sup>1</sup>

118. "No man can have a conception of the future, for the future is not yet; but of our conceptions of the past we make a future, or rather call past future <sup>Experience</sup> relatively."<sup>2</sup> And again: "The present only has a being in nature: things past have a being in the memory only, but things to come have no being at all; the future being but a fiction of the mind, applying the sequels of actions past to the actions that are present, which with most certainty is done by him that has most experience, but not with certainty enough. And though it be called prudence, when the event answereth our expectation, yet in its own nature it is but presumption."<sup>3</sup> "When we have observed antecedents and consequents frequently associated, we take one for a sign of the other; as clouds foretell rain, and rain is a sign there have been clouds. But signs are but conjectural, and their assurance is never full or evident. For though a man have always seen the day and night to follow one another hitherto, yet can he not thence conclude they shall do so, or that they have done so eternally. Experience concludeth nothing universally. But those who have most experience conjecture best, because they have most signs to conjecture by: hence old men, *ceteris paribus*, and men of quick parts, conjecture better than the young or dull."<sup>4</sup> "But experience is not to be equalled by any advantage of natural and extemporary wit, though perhaps many young men think the contrary." There is a presumption of the past as well as the future founded on experience, as when, from having often seen ashes after fire, we infer from seeing them again that there has been fire. But this is as conjectural as our expectations of the future.<sup>5</sup>

119. In the last paragraph of the chapter in the Leviathan, he adds, what is a very leading principle in the philosophy of Hobbes, but seems to have no particular relation to what has preceded: "Whatsoever we imagine is finite; therefore there is no idea or conception of any thing we call infinite. No man can have

Unconceivableness of infinity.

<sup>1</sup> Hum. Nat., c. 4, § 2.

<sup>2</sup> Id., c. 4, § 7.

<sup>3</sup> Lev., c. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Hum. Nat., c. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Lev., c. 3.

in his mind an image of infinite magnitude, nor conceive infinite swiftness, infinite time, or infinite force, or infinite power. When we say any thing is infinite, we signify only that we are not able to conceive the ends and bounds of the things named; having no conception of the thing, but of our own inability. And therefore the name of God is used, not to make us conceive him, — for he is incomprehensible, and his greatness and power are inconceivable, — but that we may honor him. Also because whatsoever, as I said before, we conceive, has been perceived first by sense, either all at once, or by parts; a man can have no thought, representing any thing, not subject to sense. No man, therefore, can conceive any thing, but he must conceive it in some place, and indeed with some determinate magnitude, and which may be divided into parts, nor that any thing is all in this place and all in another place at the same time, nor that two or more things can be in one and the same place at once. For none of these things ever have, or can be incident to sense, but are absurd speeches, taken upon credit without any signification at all, from deceived philosophers, and deceived or deceiving schoolmen." This, we have seen in the last section, had been already discussed with Descartes. The paralogism of Hobbes consists in his imposing a limited sense on the word "idea" or "conception," and assuming that what cannot be conceived according to that sense has no signification at all.

120. The next chapter, being the fifth in one treatise, and the fourth in the other, may be reckoned, perhaps, the most valuable as well as original in the writings of Hobbes. It relates to speech and language. "The invention of printing," he begins by observing, "though ingenious, compared with the invention of letters, is no great matter. . . . But the most noble and profitable invention of all others was that of speech, consisting of names or appellations, and their connection, whereby men register their thoughts, recull them when they are past, and also declare them one to another for mutual utility and conversation; without which there had been amongst men neither commonwealth nor society, nor content nor peace, no more than among lions, bears, and wolves. The first author of speech was God himself, that instructed Adam how to name such creatures as he presented to his sight; for the Scripture goeth no further in this matter. But this was sufficient to direct him to

add more names, as the experience and use of the creatures should give him occasion, and to join them in such manner by degrees as to make himself understood: and so, by succession of time, so much language might be gotten as he had found use for, though not so copious as an orator or philosopher has need of."†

121. This account of the original of language appears so general as probable as it is succinct and clear. But the assumption that there could have been no society or mutual peace among mankind without language, the ordinary instrument of contract, is too much founded upon his own political speculations; nor is it proved by the comparison to lions, bears, and wolves, even if the analogy could be admitted; since the state of warfare which he here intimates to be natural to man, does not commonly subsist in these wild animals of the same species. *Sociis inter se convenit urbis*, is an old remark. But, taking mankind with as much propensity to violence towards each other as Hobbes could suggest, is it speech, or reason and the sense of self-interest, which has restrained this within the boundaries imposed on it by civil society? The position appears to be, that man, with every other faculty and attribute of his nature except language, could never have lived in community with his fellows. It is manifest, that the mechanism of such a community would have been very imperfect. But, possessing his rational powers, it is hard to see why he might not have devised signs to make known his special wants, or why he might not have attained the peculiar prerogative of his species and foundation of society,—the exchange of what he liked less for what he liked better.

122. This will appear more evident, and the exaggerated notions of the school of Hobbes as to the absolute necessity of language to the mutual relations of mankind will be checked, by considering what was not so well understood in his age as at present,—the intellectual capacities of those who are born deaf, and the resources which they are able to employ. It can hardly be questioned, but that a number of families thrown together in this unfortunate situation, without other intercourse, could by the exercise of their natural reason, as well as the domestic and social affections, constitute themselves into a sort of common-

His political theory interferes.

Necessity of speech exaggerated.

† Leviathan, c. 4.

wealth, at least as regular as that of ants and bees. But those whom we have known to want the use of speech have also wanted the sense of hearing, and have thus been shut out from many assistances to the reasoning faculties, which our hypothesis need not exclude. The fair supposition is that of a number of persons merely dumb; and, although they would not have laws or learning, it does not seem impossible that they might maintain at least a patriarchal, if not a political, society for many generations. Upon the lowest supposition, they could not be inferior to the Chimpanzees, who are said to live in communities in the forests of Angola.

123. The succession of conceptions in the mind depending wholly on that which they had one to another when produced by the senses, they cannot be recalled at our choice and the need we have of them, "but as it chanceth us to hear and see such things as shall bring them to our mind. Hence brutes are unable to call what they want to mind, and often, though they hide food, do not know where to find it. But man has the power to set up marks or sensible objects, and remember thereby somewhat past. The most eminent of these are names or articulate sounds, by which we recall some conception of things to which we give those names; as the appellation 'white' bringeth to remembrance the quality of such objects as produce that color or conception in us. It is by names that we are capable of science, as for instance that of number; for beasts cannot number for want of words, and do not miss one or two out of their young; nor could a man, without repeating orally or mentally the words of number, know how many pieces of money may be before him."<sup>1</sup> We have here another assumption, that the numbering faculty is not stronger in man than in brutes, and also that the former could not have found out how to divide a heap of coins into parcels without the use of words of number. The experiment might be tried with a deaf and dumb child.

124. Of names, some are proper, and some common to many or universal, there being nothing in the world universal but names; for the things named are every one of them individual and singular. "One universal name is imposed on many things for their similitude in some quality or other accidents; and whereas a proper name

Names universal, not realities.

<sup>1</sup> *Hum. Nat.*, c. 5.



bringeth to mind one thing only, universals recall any one of those many."<sup>1</sup> "The universality of one name to many things hath been the cause that men think the things are themselves universal, and so seriously contend, that besides Peter and John, and all the rest of the men that are, have been, or shall be in the world, there is yet something else that we call man, viz. man in general; deceiving themselves by taking the universal or general appellation for the thing it signifieth.<sup>2</sup> For if one should desire the painter to make him the picture of a man, which is as much as to say, of a man in general, he meaneth no more but that the painter should choose what man he pleaseth to draw, which must needs be some of them that are, or have been, or may be, none of which are universal. But when he would have him to draw the picture of the king, or any particular person, he limiteth the painter to that one person he chooseth. It is plain, therefore, that there is nothing universal but names, which are therefore called indefinite."<sup>3</sup>

125. "By this imposition of names, some of larger, some of stricter signification, we turn the reckoning of the consequences of things imagined in the mind into <sup>How imposed.</sup> a reckoning of the consequences of appellations."<sup>4</sup> Hence he thinks, that, though a man born deaf and dumb might by meditation know that the angles of one triangle are equal

<sup>1</sup> *Lev.* c. 4.

<sup>2</sup> "An Universal," he says in his *Logic*, "is not a name of many things collectively, but of each taken separately (*significativum singulorum*). Man is not the name of the human species in general, but of each single man, Peter, John, and the rest, separately. Therefore this universal name is not the name of any thing existing in nature, nor of any idea or phantasm formed in the mind, but always of some word or name. Thus when an animal, or a stone, or a ghost (*spectrum*), or any thing else, is called universal, we are not to understand that any man or stone or any thing else was, or is, or can be, an universal, but only that these words 'animal,' 'stone,' and the like, are universal names, that is, names common to many things, and the concepts corresponding to them in the mind are the images and phantasms of single animals or other things. And therefore we do not need, in order to understand what is meant by an universal, any other faculty than that of imagination, by which we remember that such words have excited the conception in our minds sometimes of one particular thing, sometimes of an-

other."—*Cap.* 2, s. 9. "Imagination" and "memory" are used by Hobbes almost as synonyms.

<sup>3</sup> *Hum. Nat.* c. 5.

<sup>4</sup> It may deserve to be remarked, that Hobbes himself, nominalist as he was, did not limit reasoning to comparison of propositions, as some later writers have been inclined to do, and as, in his objections to Descartes, he might seem to do himself. This may be inferred from the sentence quoted in the text, and more expressly, though not quite perspicuously, from a passage in the *Computation*, *sive Logica*, his Latin treatise published after the *Leviathan*. "*Quomodo autem animo sine verbis tacita cogitatione rationabilia adhibere et subtrahere solentur uno aut altero exemplo ostendendum est. Si quis ergo a longinquo aliquid obscure videat, etsi nulla sint imposita vocabula, habet tamen ejus rei ideam tandem propter quam imposita nunc vocabula dicit eum rem esse corpus. Postquam autem proprius accesserit, videlicetque eandem rem certo quodam modo nunc uno, nunc alio in loco esse, habebit ejusdem ideam novam, propter quam unus talium rem animatam vocat.*" &c.—p. 2



to two right ones, he could not, on seeing another triangle of different shape, infer the same without a similar process. But by the help of words, after having observed the equality is not consequent on any thing peculiar to one triangle, but on the number of sides and angles which is common to all, he registers his discovery in a proposition. This is surely to confound the antecedent process of reasoning with what he calls the registry, which follows it. The instance, however, is not happily chosen; and Hobbes has conceded the whole point in question, by admitting that the truth of the proposition could be *observed*, which cannot require the use of words.<sup>1</sup> He expresses the next sentence with more felicity. "And thus the consequence found in one particular comes to be registered and remembered as an universal rule, and discharges our mental reckoning of time and place; and delivers us from all labor of the mind saving the first, and makes that which was found true here and now to be true in all times and places."<sup>2</sup>

126. The equivocal use of names makes it often difficult to recover those conceptions for which they were designed "not only in the language of others, wherein we are to consider the drift and occasion and contexture of the speech, as well as the words themselves, but in our own discourse, which, being derived from the custom and common use of speech, representeth unto us not our own conceptions. It is, therefore, a great ability in a man, out of the words, contexture, and other circumstances of language, to deliver himself from equivocation, and to find out the true meaning of what is said; and this is it we call understanding."<sup>3</sup> "If speech be peculiar to man, as for aught I know it is, then is understanding peculiar to him also; understanding being nothing else but conception caused by

<sup>1</sup> The demonstration of the thirty-second proposition of Euclid could leave no one in doubt whether this property were common to all triangles, after it had been proved in a single instance. It is said, however, to be recorded by an ancient writer, that this discovery was first made as to equilateral, afterwards as to isosceles, and lastly as to other triangles. Stewart's *Philosophy of Human Mind*, vol. II. chap. IV. sect. 2. The mode of proof must have been different from that of Euclid. And this might possibly lead us to suspect the truth of the tradition. For if the equality of the angles of a triangle to two right

angles admitted of any *elementary* demonstration, such as might occur in the infancy of geometry, without making use of the property of parallel lines, assumed in the twelfth axiom of Euclid, the difficulties consequent on that assumption would readily be avoided. See the Note on Euclid, I. 29, by Playfair, who has given a demonstration of his own, but one which involves the idea of motion rather more than was usual with the Greeks in their elementary propositions.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Hum. Nat.*

speech."<sup>1</sup> This definition is arbitrary, and not conformable to the usual sense. "True and false," he observes afterwards, "are attributes of speech, not of things: where speech is not, there is neither truth nor falsehood, though there may be error. Hence, as truth consists in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeks precise truth hath need to remember what every word he uses stands for, and place it accordingly. In geometry, the only science hitherto known, men begin by definitions. And every man who aspires to true knowledge should examine the definitions of former authors, and either correct them or make them anew. For the errors of definitions multiply themselves, according as the reckoning proceeds, and lead men into absurdities, which at last they see, but cannot avoid without reckoning anew from the beginning, in which lies the foundation of their errors. . . . In the right definition of names lies the first use of speech, which is the acquisition of science. And in wrong or no definitions lies the first abuse from which proceed all false and senseless tenets, which make those men that take their instruction from the authority of books, and not from their own meditation, to be as much below the condition of ignorant men, as men endued with true science are above it. For, between true science and erroneous doctrine, ignorance is in the middle. Words are wise men's counters,—they do but reckon by them; but they are the money of fools."<sup>2</sup>

127. "The names of such things as affect us, that is, which please and displease us, because all men be not alike affected with the same thing, nor the same man at all times, are, in the common discourse of men, of inconstant signification. For seeing all names are imposed to signify our conceptions, and all our affections are but conceptions, when we conceive the same thoughts differently, we can hardly avoid different naming of them. For though the nature of that we conceive be the same, yet the diversity of our reception of it, in respect of different constitutions of body and prejudices of opinion, gives every thing a tincture of our different passions. And therefore, in reasoning, a man must take heed of words, which, besides the signification of what we imagine of their nature, have a signification also of the nature, disposition, and interest of the

Names differently imposed.

speaker; such as are the names of virtues and vices: for one man calleth wisdom what another calleth fear, and one cruelly what another justice; one prodigality what another magnanimity, and one gravity what another stupidity, &c. And therefore such names can never be true grounds of any ratiocination. No more can metaphors and tropes of speech; but these are less dangerous because they profess their inconsistency, which the other do not."<sup>1</sup> Thus ends this chapter of the *Leviathan*, which, with the corresponding one in the treatise on *Human Nature*, are, notwithstanding what appear to me some erroneous principles, as full, perhaps, of deep and original thoughts as any other pages of equal length on the art of reasoning, and philosophy of language. Many have borrowed from Hobbes without naming him; and, in fact, he is the founder of the Nominalist school in England. He may probably have conversed with Bacon on these subjects: we see much of that master's style of illustration. But as Bacon was sometimes too excursive to sift particulars, so Hobbes has sometimes wanted a comprehensive view.

128. "There are," to proceed with Hobbes, "two kinds of knowledge: the one, sense, or knowledge original, and remembrance of the same; the other, science, or knowledge of the truth of propositions, derived from understanding. Both are but experience,—one of things from without, the other from the proper use of words in language; and, experience being but remembrance, all knowledge is remembrance. Knowledge implies two things, truth and evidence: the latter is the concomitance of a man's conception with the words that signify such conception in the act of ratiocination." If a man does not annex a meaning to his words, his conclusions are not evident to him. "Evidence is to truth as the sap to the tree, which, so far as it creepeth along with the body and branches, keepeth them alive: when it forsaketh them, they die; for this evidence, which is meaning with our words, is the life of truth." "Science is evidence of truth, from some beginning or principle of sense. The first principle of knowledge is, that we have such and such conceptions; the second, that we have thus and thus named the things whereof they are conceptions; the third is, that we have joined those names in such manner as to make true propositions; the fourth and last is, that we have

<sup>1</sup> *Lev.*

joined these propositions in such manner as they be concluding, and the truth of the conclusion said to be known."<sup>1</sup>

129. Reasoning is the addition or subtraction of parcels. "In whatever matter there is room for addition and subtraction, there is room for reason; and where Reasoning, these have no place, then reason has nothing at all to do."<sup>2</sup> This is neither as perspicuously expressed, nor as satisfactorily illustrated, as is usual with Hobbes; but it is true that all syllogistic reasoning is dependent upon quantity alone, and consequently upon that which is capable of addition and subtraction. This seems not to have been clearly perceived by some writers of the old Aristotelian school, or perhaps by some others, who, as far as I can judge, have a notion that the relation of a genus to a species, or a predicate to its subject, considered merely as to syllogism or deductive reasoning, is something different from that of a whole to its parts; which would deprive that logic of its chief boast, its axiomatic evidence. But, as this would appear too dry to some readers, I shall pursue it farther in a note.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ham. Nat., c. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Lev., c. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Donald Stewart (Elements of Philosophy, &c., vol. II. ch. II. sect. 2) has treated this theory of Hobbes on reasoning, as well as that of Condillac, which seems much the same, with great scorn, as "too possible to admit of (i. e., require) refutation." I do not myself think the language of Hobbes, either here, or as quoted by Stewart from his Latin treatise on Logic, so perspicuous as usual. But I cannot help being of opinion, that he is substantially right. For surely, when we assert that A is B, we assert that all things which fall under the class B, taken collectively, comprehend A; or that  $B = A + X$ ; B being here put, it is to be observed, not for the *res predicata* itself, but for the concrete *de quibus iudicandum est*. I mention this, because this elliptical use of the word "predicate" seems to have occasioned some confusion in writers on logic. The predicate, strictly taken, being an attribute or quality, cannot be said to include or contain the subject. But to return, when we say  $B = A + X$ , or  $B - X = A$ , since we do not compare, in such a proposition as is here supposed, A with X, we only mean that  $A = A$ , or that a certain part of B is the same as itself. Again, in a particular affirmative, Some A is B, we assert that part of A, or  $A - Y$ , is contained in B, or that B may be expressed by  $A - Y + X$ . So also when we say, Some A

is not B, we equally divide the class or genus B into  $A - Y$  and X, or assert that  $B = A - Y + X$ ; but, in this case, the subject is no longer  $A - Y$ , but the remainder, or other part of A, namely, Y; and this is not found in either term of the predicate. Finally, in the universal negative, No A (neither  $A - Y$  nor Y) is B, the  $A - Y$  of the predicate vanishes or has no value, and B becomes equal to X, which is incapable of measurement with A, and consequently with either  $A - Y$  or Y, which make up A. Now, if we combine this with another proposition, in order to form a syllogism, and say that C is A, we find, as before, that  $A = C + Z$ ; and, substituting this value of A in the former proposition, it appears that  $B = C + Z + X$ . Then, in the conclusion, we have, C is B; that is, C is a part of  $C + Z + X$ . And the same in the three other cases or moods of the figure. This seems to be, in plainer terms, what Hobbes means by addition or subtraction of parcels, and what Condillac means by rather a lax expression, that equations and propositions are at bottom the same; or, as he phrases it better, "l'évidence de raison consiste uniquement dans l'identité." If we add to this, as he probably intended, non-identity, or the condition of all negative conclusions, it seems to be no more than is necessarily involved in the fundamental principle of syllogism, the *dictum de omni et nullo* which may be thus reduced to its shortest

130. A man may reckon without the use of words in particular things, as in conjecturing from the sight of any thing what is likely to follow; and, if he reckons

False reasoning.

terms: "Whatever can be divided into parts, includes all those parts, and nothing else." This is not limited to mathematical quantity, but includes every thing which admits of more and less. Hobbes has a good passage in his *Logic* on this: "Non putandum est computationi, id est, rationationi in numeris tantum locum esse, tanquam homo a cæteris animalibus, quod censuere narratur Pythagoras, sola numerandi facultate distinctus esse; nam et magnitudo magnitudinis, corpus corpori, motus motui, tempus tempori, gradus qualitatis gradui, actio actioni, conceptus conceptui, proportio proportioni, oratio orationi, nomen nomini, in quibus omne philosophiæ genus continetur, adjici admiq̃ue potest."

But it does not follow by any means, that we should assent to the strange passages quoted by Stewart from Condillæ and Diderot, which reduce all *knowledge* to identical propositions. Even in geometry, where the objects are strictly magnitudes, the countless variety in which their relations may be exhibited constitutes the riches of that inexhaustible science; and, in moral or physical propositions, the relation of quantity between the subject and predicate, as concretes, which enables them to be compared, though it is the sole foundation of all *general deductive reasoning*, or syllogism, has nothing to do with the other properties or relations, of which we obtain a knowledge by means of that comparison. In mathematical reasoning, we infer as to quantity through the medium of quantity; in other reasoning, we use the same medium, but our inference is as to truths which do not lie within that category. Thus in the hackneyed instance, All men are mortal,—that is, mortal creatures include men and something more,—it is absurd to assert, that we only know that men are men. It is true that our knowledge of the truth of the proposition comes by the help of this comparison of men in the subject with men as implied in the predicate; but the very nature of the proposition discovers a constant relation between the individuals of the human species and that mortality which is predicated of them along with others: and it is in this, not in an identical equation, as Diderot seems to have thought, that our *knowledge* consists.

The remarks of Stewart's friend, M. Prevost of Geneva, on the principle of identity as the basis of mathematical science, and which the former has can-

dily subjoined to his own volume, appears to me very satisfactory. Stewart comes to admit that the dispute is nearly verbal but we cannot say that he originally treated it as such; and the principle itself both as applied to geometry and to logic, is, in my opinion, of some importance to the clearness of our conceptions as to these sciences. It may be added, that Stewart's objection to the principle of identity as the basis of geometrical reasoning is less forcible in its application to syllogism. He is willing to admit that magnitudes capable of coincidence by immediate superposition may be reckoned identical, but scruples to apply such a word to those which are dissimilar in figure, as the rectangles of the means and extremes of four proportional lines. Neither one nor the other are, in fact identical as real quantities, the forms being necessarily conceived to differ from each other by position in space, as much as the latter; so that the expression he quotes from Aristotle, *ἐν τοιούτοις ἡ ἰσότης ἐνότης*, or any similar one of modern mathematicians, can only refer to the abstract magnitude of their areas, which being divisible into the same number of equal parts, they are called the same. And there seems no real difference in this respect between two circles of equal radii and two such rectangles as are supposed above; the identity of their magnitudes being a distinct truth, independent of any consideration either of their figure or their position. But, however this may be, the identity of the subject with part of the predicate in an affirmative proposition is never fictitious, but real. It means that the persons or things in the one are strictly the same beings with the persons or things to which they are compared in the other, though, through some difference of relations, or other circumstance, they are expressed in different language. It is needless to give examples, as all those who can read this note at all will know how to find them.

I will here take the liberty to remark, though not closely connected with the present subject, that Archbishop Whately is not quite right in saying (*Elements of Logic*, p. 46), that, in affirmative propositions, the predicate is *never* distributed. Besides the numerous instances where this is, in point of fact, the case, all which he justly excludes, there are many in which it is involved in the very form of the proposition. Such are those which



wrong, it is error. But in reasoning on general words, to fall on a false inference is not error, though often so called, but

assert identity or equality, and such are all definitions. Of the first sort are all the theorems in geometry, asserting an equality of magnitudes or ratios, in which the subject and predicate may always change places. It is true, that, in the instance given in the work quoted,—that equilateral triangles are equiangular,—the converse requires a separate proof, and so in many similar cases. But, in these, the predicate is not distributed by the form of the proposition: they assert no equality of magnitude.

The position, that, where such equality is affirmed, the predicate is not *logically* distributed, would lead to the consequence, that it can only be converted into a particular affirmation. Thus, after proving that the square of the hypotenuse in all right-angled triangles is equal to those of the sides, we could only infer that the squares of the sides are *sometimes* equal to that of the hypotenuse; which could not be maintained without rendering the rules of logic ridiculous. The most general mode of considering the question, is to say, as we have done above, that, in an universal affirmative, the predicate B (that is, the class of which B is predicated) is composed of A, the subject, and X, an unknown remainder. But if, by the very nature of the proposition, we perceive that X is nothing, or has no value, it is plain that the subject measures the entire predicate: and, *vice versa*, the predicate measures the subject: in other words, each is taken uniformly, or distributed.

A critic upon the first edition has observed, that "nothing is clearer than that in these propositions the predicate is not necessarily distributed:" and even hints a doubt whether I understood the terms rightly. *Edinburgh Review*, vol. lxxii. p. 219. This supposition of my ignorance as to the meaning of the two commonest words in logic I need not probably repeat: as to the peremptory assertion of this critic, without any proof beyond his own authority, that, in propositions denoting equality of magnitude, the predicate is not necessarily distributed, if his own reflections do not convince him, I can only refer him to Aristotle's words: *ἐν τοῖσις ἰσότητος ἐκείναις*; and I presume he does not doubt, that, in identical propositions of the form, A ad A, the distribution of the predicate, or the convertibility of the proposition, which is the same thing, is manifest.—1842.)

[Held observes, in his *Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic*, that "the doctrine of the

conversion of propositions is not so complete as it appears. Now, for instance, shall we convert this proposition, 'God is omniscient?'"] Sir W. Hamilton, who, as editor of *Held*, undertakes the defence against him of every thing in the established logic, rather curiously answers, in his notes on this passage: "By saying *Am*, or *The omniscient is God*." [Hamilton's edition of *Held*, p. 687.] The rule requires, "An omniscient," a conversion into the particular: but, as this would be shocking, he substitutes, as an alternative, *the*, which is to take generally or distribute the predicate in the first proposition; and to this the nature of the proposition leads us, as it does in innumerable cases. However, as logical writers, especially the recent, commonly exclude all consideration of the subject-matter of propositions, it may be correct to say, with Archbishop Whately, that, as a rule of syllogism, the predicate is not distributed. Aristotle himself, though he lays this down as a formal rule, does not hesitate to say, that, where the predicate is the *proprium* (*ιδίον*) or characteristic of the subject, and of nothing else, it may be reciprocated (*ἀντικατηγοριῖται*) with the subject: as, If it is the *proprium* of a man to be capable of learning grammar, all men are capable of being grammarians, and all who are such are men. *Topics*, i. 4. And in the well-known passage upon inductive syllogism, *Analyst. Prior.*, i. ii. c. 23, he shows the minor premise to be convertible into an universal affirmative, by which alone such a syllogism differs from the logical form called *Darapti*. But, as Aristotle notoriously considers syllogisms in their matter as well as form, the modern writers, who confine themselves to the latter, are not concluded by his authority. Their theory, which not only reduces all logic to syllogism, but all syllogism to a very few rules of form, so that we may learn every thing that can be learned in this art through the letters A, B, and C, without any examples at all, appears to render it more jejune and unprofitable than ever. The comparison which some have made of this literal logic with algebra is surely not to the purpose: for we cannot make a step in algebra without known as well as unknown quantities. At 5500 as we substitute real examples, we must perceive that the predicate is sometimes distributed in affirmative propositions by the sense of the propositions themselves, and without any express proof; which is all that I meant.—1847.]

absurdity.<sup>1</sup> "If a man should talk to me of a round quadrangle, or accidents of bread in cheese, or immaterial substances, or of a free subject, a free will, or any free, but free from being hindered by opposition, I should not say he were in error, but that his words were without meaning, that is to say, absurd." Some of these propositions, it will occur, are intelligible in a reasonable sense, and not contradictory, except by means of an arbitrary definition which he who employs them does not admit. It may be observed here, as we have done before, that Hobbes does not confine reckoning, or reasoning, to universals, or even to words.

131. Man has the exclusive privilege of forming general theorems. But this privilege is allayed by another, *its frequency.* that is, by the privilege of absurdity, to which no living creature is subject, but man only. And of men those are of all most subject to it, that profess philosophy. . . . For there is not one that begins his ratiocination from the definitions or explications of the names they are to use, which is a method used only in geometry, whose conclusions have thereby been made indisputable. He then enumerates seven causes of absurd conclusions; the first of which is the want of definitions, the others are erroneous imposition of names. If we can avoid these errors, it is not easy to fall into absurdity (by which he of course only means any wrong conclusion), except perhaps by the length of a reasoning. "For all men," he says, "by nature reason alike, and well, when they have good principles. Hence it appears that reason is not as sense and memory born with us, nor gotten by experience only, as prudence is, but attained by industry, in apt imposing of names, and in getting a good and orderly method of proceeding from the elements to assertions, and so to syllogisms. Children are not endued with reason at all till they have attained the use of speech, but are called reasonable creatures, for the possibility of having the use of reason hereafter. And reasoning serves the generality of mankind very little, though with their natural prudence without science they are in better condition than those who reason ill themselves, or trust those who have done so."<sup>2</sup> It has been observed by Buhle, that Hobbes had more respect for the Aristotelian forms of logic than his master Bacon. He has in fact written a short treatise, in his *Elementa Philosophiæ*, on the subject; observing,

<sup>1</sup> *Levi*, c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> 14.

however, therein, that a true logic will be sooner learned by attending to geometrical demonstrations than by drudging over the rules of syllogism, as children learn to walk not by precept but by habit.<sup>1</sup>

182. "No discourse whatever," he says truly in the seventh chapter of the *Leviathan*, "can end in absolute knowledge of fact, past or to come. For, as to the knowledge of fact, it is originally sense; and, ever after, memory. And for the knowledge of consequence, which I have said before is called science, it is not absolute, but conditional. No man can know by discourse that this or that is, has been, or will be, which is to know absolutely; but only that if this is, that is; if this has been, that has been; if this shall be, that shall be; which is to know conditionally, and that not the consequence of one thing to another, but of one name of a thing to another name of the same thing. And therefore when the discourse is put into speech, and begins with the definitions of words, and proceeds by connection of the same into general affirmations, and of those again into syllogisms, the end or last sum is called the conclusion, and the thought of the mind by it signified is that conditional knowledge of the consequence of words which is commonly called science. But if the first ground of such discourse be not definitions, or, if definitions, be not rightly joined together in syllogisms, then the end or conclusion is again opinion, namely, of the truth of somewhat said, though sometimes in absurd and senseless words, without possibility of being understood."<sup>2</sup>

183. "Belief, which is the admitting of propositions upon trust, in many cases is no less free from doubt than perfect and manifest knowledge; for as there is nothing whereof there is not some cause, so, when there is doubt there must be some cause thereof conceived. Now, there be many things which we receive from the report of others, of which it is impossible to imagine any cause of doubt; for

Knowledge of fact not derived from reasoning.

Belief.

<sup>1</sup> "Utius multo veram logicam discunt qui mathematicorum demonstrationibus, quam qui logicorum syllogizandi preceptis legendis tempus conterunt, haud aliter quam parvuli pueri graecum formare discunt non preceptis sed expe. gradulando." — *C. iv. p. 30.* "Atque haec sufficiunt" (he says afterwards) "de syllogismo, qui est antiqua graecae philosophiae; nam et quantum necesse est ad cognoscendum

unde vim suam habent omnis argumentatio legitima, tantum diximus; et omnia accumulare quae dici possunt, aequosuperfluum esset ac si quis ut diu puerulo ad gradulandum precepta dare vellet; acquiritur enim rationandi ars non preceptis sed usu et lectione eorum librorum in quibus omnia severis demonstrationibus transiguntur." — *C. v. p. 35.*

<sup>2</sup> *Lev., c. 7.*

what can be opposed against the consent of all men, in things they can know and have no cause to report otherwise than they are, such as is great part of our histories, unless a man would say that all the world had conspired to deceive him?"<sup>1</sup> Whatever we believe on the authority of the speaker, he is the object of our faith. Consequently, when we believe that the Scriptures are the word of God, having no immediate revelation from God himself, our belief, faith, and trust is in the church, whose word we take and acquiesce therein. Hence all we believe on the authority of men, whether they be sent from God or not, is faith in men only.<sup>2</sup> We have no certain knowledge of the truth of Scripture, but trust the holy men of God's church succeeding one another from the time of those who saw the wondrous works of God Almighty in the flesh. And, as we believe the Scriptures to be the word of God on the authority of the church, the interpretation of the Scripture in case of controversy ought to be trusted to the church rather than private opinion.<sup>3</sup>

134. The ninth chapter of the *Leviathan* contains a synop-  
Chart of science. tical chart of human science, or "knowledge of consequences," also called philosophy. He divides it into natural and civil, the former into consequences from accidents common to all bodies, quantity and motion, and those from qualities otherwise called physics. The first includes astronomy, mechanics, architecture, as well as mathematics. The second he distinguishes into consequences from qualities of bodies transient, or meteorology, and from those of bodies permanent, such as the stars, the atmosphere, or terrestrial bodies. The last are divided again into those without sense, and those with sense; and these, into animals and men. In the consequences from the qualities of animals generally, he reckons optics and music; in those from men, we find ethics, poetry, rhetoric, and logic. These altogether constitute the first great head of natural philosophy. In the second, or civil philosophy, he includes nothing but the rights and duties of sovereigns and their subjects. This chart of human knowledge is one of the worst that has been propounded, and falls much below that of Bacon.<sup>4</sup>

135. This is the substance of the philosophy of Hobbes, so far as it relates to the intellectual faculties, and especially

<sup>1</sup> *Hum. Nat.*, c. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Lev.*, c. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Hum. Nat.*, c. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Lev.*, c. 9.



to that of reasoning. In the seventh and two following chapters of the treatise on Human Nature, in the ninth and tenth of the *Leviathan*, he proceeds to the <sup>Analysis of passions.</sup> analysis of the passions. The motion in some internal substance of the head, if it does not stop there, producing mere conceptions, proceeds to the heart, helping or hindering the vital motions, which he distinguishes from the voluntary, exciting in us pleasant or painful affections, called passions. We are solicited by these to draw near to that which pleases us, and the contrary. Hence pleasure, love, appetite, desire, are divers names for divers considerations of the same thing. As all conceptions we have immediately by the sense are delight or pain or appetite or fear, so are all the imaginations after sense. But as they are weaker imaginations, so are they also weaker pleasures or weaker pains.<sup>1</sup> All delight is appetite, and presupposes a further end. There is no utmost end in this world; for, while we live, we have desires, and desire presupposes a further end. We are not, therefore, to wonder that men desire more, the more they possess; for felicity, by which we mean continual delight, consists, not in having prospered, but in prospering.<sup>2</sup> Each passion, being, as he fancies, a continuation of the motion which gives rise to a peculiar conception, is associated with it. They all, except such as are immediately connected with sense, consist in the conception of a power to produce some effect. To honor a man is to conceive that he has an excess of power over some one with whom he is compared: hence qualities indicative of power, and actions significant of it, are honorable; riches are honored as signs of power, and nobility is honorable as a sign of power in ancestors.<sup>3</sup>

136. "The constitution of man's body is in perpetual mutation, and hence it is impossible that all the same things should always cause in him the same appetites and aversions; much less can all men consent in the desire of any one object. But whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calls good; and the object of his hate and aversion, evil; or of his contempt, vile and inconsiderable. For these words of good, evil, and contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person using them; there being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil, to be taken

<sup>1</sup> *Hum. Nat.*, c. 7.<sup>2</sup> *Hum. Nat.*, c. 7; *Lev.* c. 11.<sup>3</sup> *Hum. Nat.*, c. 8.



from the nature of the objects themselves, but from the person of the man, where there is no commonwealth, or, in a commonwealth, from the person that represents us, or from an arbitrator or judge, whom men disagreeing shall by consent set up, and make his sentence the rule thereof."<sup>1</sup>

137. In prosecuting this analysis, all the passions are resolved into self-love, the pleasure that we take in our own power, the pain that we suffer in wanting it. Some of his explications are very forced. Thus weeping is said to be from a sense of our want of power. And here comes one of his strange paradoxes. "Men are apt to weep that prosecute revenge, when the revenge is suddenly stopped or frustrated by the repentance of their adversary; and such are the tears of reconciliation."<sup>2</sup> So resolute was he to resort to any thing the most preposterous, rather than admit a moral feeling in human nature. His account of laughter is better known, and perhaps more probable, though not explaining the whole of the case. After justly observing, that, whatsoever it be that moves laughter, it must be new and unexpected, he defines it to be "a sudden glory arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly; for men laugh at the follies of themselves past." It might be objected, that those are most prone to laughter who have least of this glorying in themselves, or undervaluing of their neighbors.

138. "There is a great difference between the desire of a man when indefinite, and the same desire limited to one person; and this is that love which is the great theme of poets. But, notwithstanding their praises, it must be defined by the word 'need;' for it is a conception a man hath of his need of that one person desired."<sup>3</sup> There is yet another passion sometimes called love, but more properly good-will or charity. There can be no greater argument to a man of his own power than to find himself able, not only to accomplish his own desires, but also to assist other men in theirs; and this is that conception wherein consists charity. In which first is contained that natural affection of parents towards their children, which the Greeks call *στοργή*, as also that affection wherewith men seek to assist those that adhere unto them. But the affection wherewith men many times bestow their benefits on strangers is not to be called charity,

<sup>1</sup> Lev., v. 6.<sup>2</sup> Hum. Nat., c. 9; Lev., c. 6 and 10.<sup>3</sup> Hum. Nat., c. 9.

but either contract, whereby they seek to purchase friendship, or fear, which makes them to purchase peace."<sup>1</sup> This is equally contrary to notorious truth, there being neither fear nor contract in generosity towards strangers. It is, however, not so extravagant as a subsequent position, that in beholding the danger of a ship in a tempest, though there is pity, which is grief, yet "the delight in our own security is so far predominant, that men usually are content in such a case to be spectators of the misery of their friends."<sup>2</sup>

139. As knowledge begins from experience, new experience is the beginning of new knowledge. Whatever, therefore, happens new to a man, gives him the hope of knowing somewhat he knew not before. This appetite of knowledge is curiosity. It is peculiar to man; for beasts never regard new things, except to discern how far they may be useful, while man looks for the cause and beginning of all he sees.<sup>3</sup> This attribute of curiosity seems rather hastily denied to beasts. And as men, he says, are always seeking new knowledge, so are they always deriving some new gratification. There is no such thing as perpetual tranquillity of mind while we live here, because life itself is but motion, and can never be without desire nor without fear, no more than without sense. "What kind of felicity God hath ordained in them that devoutly honor him, a man shall no sooner know than enjoy, being joys that now are as incomprehensible, as the word of schoolmen, 'beatifical vision,' is unintelligible."<sup>4</sup>

140. From the consideration of the passions, Hobbes advances to inquire what are the causes of the difference in the intellectual capacities and dispositions of men.<sup>5</sup> Their bodily senses are nearly alike, whence he precipitately infers there can be no great difference in the brain. Yet men differ much in their bodily constitution, whence he derives the principal differences in their minds: some, being addicted to sensual pleasures, are less curious as to knowledge, or ambitious as to power. This is called dulness, and proceeds from the appetite of bodily delight. The contrary to this is a quick ranging of mind accompanied with curiosity in comparing things that come into it, either as to unexpected similitude, in which fancy consists, or dissimili-

Curiosity.

Difference of intellectual capacities.

<sup>1</sup> Hum. Nat., c. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* This is an exaggeration of some well known lines of Lucretius, which are themselves exaggerated.

<sup>3</sup> Hum. Nat., c. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Lev., c. 6 and c. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Hum. Nat., c. 10.

tude in things appearing the same, which is properly called judgment; "for to judge is nothing else but to distinguish and discern. And both fancy and judgment are commonly comprehended under the name of wit, which seems to be a tenuity and agility of spirits, contrary to that restiness of the spirits supposed in those who are dull."<sup>1</sup>

141. We call it levity, when the mind is easily diverted, and the discourse is parenthetical; and this proceeds from curiosity with too much equality and indifference; for, when all things make equal impression and delight, they equally throng to be expressed. A different fault is indocibility, or difficulty of being taught; which must arise from a false opinion that men know already the truth of what is called in question: for certainly they are not otherwise so unequal in capacity as not to discern the difference of what is proved and what is not; and therefore, if the minds of men were all of white paper, they would all most equally be disposed to acknowledge whatever should be in right method, and by right ratiocination delivered to them. But when men have once acquiesced in untrue opinions, and registered them as authentic records in their minds, it is no less impossible to speak intelligibly to such men than to write legibly on a paper already scribbled over. The immediate cause, therefore, of indocibility is prejudice, and of prejudice false opinion of our own knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

142. Intellectual virtues are such abilities as go by the name of a good wit, which may be natural or acquired. "By natural wit," says Hobbes, "I mean not that which a man hath from his birth; for that is nothing else but sense, wherein men differ so little from one another, and from brute beasts, as it is not to be reckoned among virtues. But I mean that wit which is gotten by use only and experience, without method, culture, or instruction, and consists chiefly in celerity of imagining and steady direction. And the difference in this quickness is caused by that of men's passions that love and dislike some one thing, some another; and therefore some men's thoughts run one way, some another; and are held to, and observe differently the things that pass through their imagination." Fancy is not praised without judgment and discretion, which is properly a discerning of times, places, and persons; but judgment and

<sup>1</sup> Hum. Nat.

<sup>2</sup> 14.

discretion is commended for itself without fancy: without steadiness and direction to some end, a great fancy is one kind of madness, such as they have who lose themselves in long digressions and parentheses. If the defect of discretion be apparent, how extravagant soever the fancy be, the whole discourse will be taken for a want of wit.<sup>1</sup>

143. The causes of the difference of wits are in the passions; and the difference of passions proceeds partly from the different constitution of the body and partly from different education. Those passions are chiefly the desire of power, riches, knowledge, or honor; all which may be reduced to the first: for riches, knowledge, and honor are but several sorts of power. He who has no great passion for any of these, though he may be so far a good man as to be free from giving offence, yet cannot possibly have either a great fancy or much judgment. To have weak passions is dulness; to have passions indifferently for every thing, giddiness and distraction; to have stronger passions for any thing than others have is madness. Madness may be the excess of many passions; and the passions themselves, when they lead to evil, are degrees of it. Differences in the passions. He seems to have had some notion of what Butler is reported to have thrown out as to the madness of a whole people. "What argument for madness can there be greater, than to clamor, strike, and throw stones at our best friends? Yet this is somewhat less than such a multitude will do. For they will clamor, fight against, and destroy those by whom all their lifetime before they have been protected, and secured from injury. And, if this be madness in the multitude, it is the same in every particular man."<sup>2</sup> Madness.

144. There is a fault in some men's habit of discoursing, which may be reckoned a sort of madness, which is when they speak words with no signification at all. Unmeaning language. "And this is incident to none but those that converse in questions of matters incomprehensible as the schoolmen, or in questions of abstruse philosophy. The common sort of men seldom speak insignificantly, and are therefore by those other egregious persons counted idiots. But, to be assured their words are without any thing correspondent to them in the mind, there would need some examples; which if any man require, let him take a schoolman into his hands, and see if he

<sup>1</sup> *Let., c. 8.*<sup>2</sup> *Id.*



can translate any one chapter concerning any difficult point, as the Trinity, the Deity, the nature of Christ, transubstantiation, free-will, &c., into any of the modern tongues, so as to make the same intelligible, or into any tolerable Latin, such as they were acquainted with that lived when the Latin tongue was vulgar." And, after quoting some words from Suarez, he adds, "When men write whole volumes of such stuff, are they not mad, or intend to make others so?"<sup>1</sup>

145. The eleventh chapter of the *Leviathan*, "On manners," by which he means those qualities of mankind which concern their living together in peace and unity, is full of Hobbes's caustic remarks on human nature. Often acute, but always severe, he ascribes overmuch to a deliberate and calculating selfishness. Thus the reverence of antiquity is referred to "the contention men have with the living, not with the dead; to these ascribing more than due, that they may obscure the glory of the other." Thus, also, "to have received, from one to whom we think ourselves equal, greater benefits than we can hope to requite, disposes to counterfeit love, but really to secret hatred, and puts a man into the estate of a desperate debtor, that, in declining the sight of his creditor, tacitly wishes him where he might never see him more. For benefits oblige, and obligation is thralldom; and unrequitable obligation perpetual thralldom, which is to one's equal hateful." He owns, however, that to have received benefits from a superior, disposes us to love him; and so it does where we can hope to requite even an equal. If these maxims have a certain basis of truth, they have at least the fault of those of Rochefoucault: they are made too generally characteristic of mankind.

146. Ignorance of the signification of words disposes men to take on trust not only the truth they know not, but also errors and nonsense. For neither can be detected without a perfect understanding of words. "But ignorance of the causes and original constitution of right, equity, law, and justice, disposes a man to make custom and example the rule of his actions, in such manner as to think that unjust which it has been the custom to punish; and that just, of the impunity and approbation of which they can produce an example, or, as the lawyers which only use this false measure of justice barbarously call it, a precedent."

<sup>1</sup> *Lev.*



\* Men appeal from custom to reason, and from reason to custom, as it serves their turn; receding from custom when their interest requires it, and setting themselves against reason as oft as reason is against them; which is the cause that the doctrine of right and wrong is perpetually disputed both by the pen and the sword: whereas the doctrine of lines and figures is not so, because men care not in that subject what is truth, as it is a thing that crosses no man's ambition, profit, or lust. For I doubt not, but if it had been a thing contrary to any man's right of dominion, or to the interest of men that have dominion, that the three angles of a triangle should be equal to two angles of a square, that doctrine should have been, if not disputed, yet, by the burning of all books of geometry, suppressed as far as he whom it concerned was able.<sup>1</sup> This excellent piece of satire has been often quoted, and sometimes copied, and does not exaggerate the pertinacity of mankind in resisting the evidence of truth, when it thwarts the interests and passions of any particular sect or community. In the earlier part of the paragraph, it seems not so easy to reconcile what Hobbes has said with his general notions of right and justice; since if these resolve themselves, as is his theory, into mere force, there can be little appeal to reason, or to any thing else than custom and precedent, which are commonly the exponents of power.

147. In the conclusion of this chapter of the *Leviathan*, as well as in the next, he dwells more on the nature of religion than he had done in the former treatise, and so as to subject himself to the imputation of absolute atheism, or at least of a denial of most attributes which we assign to the Deity. "Curiosity about causes," he says, "led men to search out, one after the other, till they came to this necessary conclusion, that there is some eternal cause which men call God. But they have no more idea of his nature than a blind man has of fire, though he knows that there is something that warms him. So, by the visible things of this world and their admirable order, a man may conceive there is a cause of them, which men call God, and yet not have an idea or image of him in his mind. And they that make little inquiry into the natural causes of things are inclined to feign several kinds of powers invisible, and to stand in awe of their own imaginations. And this fear of things invisible is the

<sup>1</sup> *Leviat.*, c. 11

natural seed of that which every one in himself calleth religion, and in them that worship or fear that power otherwise than they do, superstition."

148. "As God is incomprehensible, it follows that we can have no conception or image of the Deity; and, consequently, all his attributes signify our inability or defect of power to conceive any thing concerning his nature, and not any conception of the same, excepting only this, that there is a God. Men that by their own meditation arrive at the acknowledgment of one infinite, omnipotent, and eternal God, choose rather to confess this is incomprehensible and above their understanding, than to define his nature by spirit incorporeal, and then confess their definition to be unintelligible."<sup>1</sup> For, concerning such spirits, he holds that it is not possible by natural means only to come to the knowledge of so much as that there are such things.<sup>2</sup>

149. Religion he derives from three sources,—the desire of men to search for causes, the reference of every thing that has a beginning to some cause, and the observation of the order and consequence of things. But the two former lead to anxiety; for the knowledge that there have been causes of the effects we see, leads us to anticipate that they will in time be the causes of effects to come; so that every man, especially such as are over-provident, is "like Prometheus, the prudent man, as his name implies, who was bound to the hill Caucasus, a place of large prospect, where an eagle feeding on his liver devoured as much by day as was repaired by night; and so he who looks too far before him has his heart all day long gnawed by the fear of death, poverty, or other calamity, and has no repose nor pause but in sleep." This is an allusion made in the style of Lord Bacon. The ignorance of causes makes men fear some invisible agent, like the gods of the Gentiles; but the investigation of them leads us to a God eternal, infinite, and omnipotent. This ignorance, however, of second causes, conspiring with three other prejudices of mankind,—the belief in ghosts, or spirits of subtile bodies, the devotion and reverence generally shown towards what we fear as having power to hurt us, and the taking of things casual for prognostics,—are altogether the natural seed of religion; which, by reason of the different fancies, judgments, and passions of several men:

<sup>1</sup> Lev., c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Hum. Nat., c. 11.

bath grown up into ceremonies so different, that those which are used by one man are for the most part ridiculous to another. He illustrates this by a variety of instances from ancient superstitions. But the forms of religion are changed when men suspect the wisdom, sincerity, or love of those who teach it, or its priests.<sup>1</sup> The remaining portion of the Leviathan, relating to moral and political philosophy, must be deferred to our next chapter.

150. The *Elementa Philosophiæ* were published by Hobbes in 1655, and dedicated to his constant patron, the Earl of Devonshire. These are divided into three parts; entitled *De Corpore*, *De Homine*, and *De Cive*. And the first part has itself three divisions; *Logic*, the *First Philosophy*, and *Physics*. The second part, *De Homine*, is neither the treatise of *Human Nature*, nor the corresponding part of the *Leviathan*, though it contains many things substantially found there. A long disquisition on optics and the nature of vision, chiefly geometrical, is entirely new. The third part, *De Cive*, is the treatise by that name, reprinted, as far as I am aware, without alteration.

151. The first part of the first treatise, entitled *Computative Logica*, is by no means the least valuable among the philosophical writings of Hobbes. In forty pages the subject is very well and clearly explained; nor do I know that the principles are better laid down, or the rules more sufficiently given, in more prolix treatises. Many of his observations, especially as to words, are such as we find in his English works; and perhaps his nominalism is more clearly expressed than it is in them. Of the syllogistic method, at least for the purpose of demonstration, or teaching others, he seems to have entertained a favorable opinion, or even to have held it necessary for real demonstration, as his definition shows. Hobbes appears to be aware of what I do not remember to have seen put by others, that, in the natural process of reasoning, the minor premise commonly precedes the major.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lev.* c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> In Whately's *Logic*, p. 60, it is observed, that "the proper order is to place the major premise first, and the minor second, but this does not constitute the major and minor premises," &c. It may be the proper order in one sense, as explaining better the foundation of syllogistic reasoning; but it is not that which we commonly follow, either in thinking

or in proving to others. In mathematical used exclusively. It is admitted that the proper order is to place the major premise first, and the minor second, but this does not constitute the major and minor premises, &c. It may be the proper order in one sense, as explaining better the foundation of syllogistic reasoning; but it is not that which we commonly follow, either in thinking

It is for want of attending to this, that syllogisms, as usually stated, are apt to have so formal and unnatural a construction. The process of the mind in this kind of reasoning is explained, in general, with correctness, and, I believe, with originality, in the following passage, which I shall transcribe from the Latin, rather than give a version of my own; few probably being likely to read the present section, who are unacquainted with that language. The style of Hobbes, though perspicuous, is concise, and the original words will be more satisfactory than any translation.

152. "Syllogismo directo cogitatio in animo respondens est hujusmodi. Primo concipitur phantasma rei nominatæ cum accidente sive affectu ejus propter quem appellatur eo nomine quod est in minore propositione subjectum; deinde animo occurrit phantasma ejusdem rei cum accidente sive affectu propter quem appellatur, quod est in eadem propositione predicatum. Tertio redit cogitatio rursus ad rem nominatam cum affectu propter quem eo nomine appellatur, quod est in predicato propositionis majoris. Postremo cum meminerit eos affectus esse omnes unius et ejusdem rei, concludit tria illa nomina ejusdem quoque rei esse nomina; hoc est, conclusionem esse veram. Exempli causa, quando fit syllogismus hic, Homo est Animal, Animal est Corpus, ergo Homo est Corpus, occurrit animo imago hominis loquentis vel differentis [sic, sed lege disserentis], meminitque id quod sic apparet vocari hominem. Deinde occurrit eadem imago ejusdem hominis sese moventis, meminitque id quod sic apparet vocari animal. Tertio recurrit eadem imago hominis locum aliquem sive spatium occupantis, meminitque id quod sic apparet vocari corpus.<sup>1</sup> Postremo cum meminerit rem illam quæ et

is beginning with the major premise, yet the process of reasoning which a boy employs in construing a Latin sentence is the reverse. He observes a nominative case, a verb in the third person, and then applies his general rule, or major, to the particular instance, or minor, so as to infer their agreement. In criminal jurisprudence, the Scots begin with the major premise, or relevancy of the indictment, when there is room for doubt; the English, with the minor, or evidence of the fact, reserving the other for what we call action in arrest of judgment. Instances of both orders are common; but by far the most frequent are of that which the Archbishop of Dublin reckons the less proper of the two. Those logicians who

fail to direct the student's attention to this, really do not justice to their own favorite science.

<sup>1</sup> This is the questionable part of Hobbes's theory of syllogism. According to the common and obvious understanding, the mind, in the major premise, "Animal est Corpus," does not reflect on the subject of the minor, *Homo*, as occupying space, but on the subject of the major, *Animal*, which includes, indeed, the former, but is mentally substituted for it. It may sometimes happen, that, where this predicate of the minor term is manifestly a collective word that comprehends the subject, the latter is not, as it were, absorbed in it, and may be contemplated by the mind distinctly in the major; as if we

extendebatur secundum locum, et loco movebatur, et oratione utebatur, unam et eandem fuisse, concludit etiam nomina illa tria, Homo, Animal, Corpus, ejusdem rei esse nomina, et proinde, Homo est Corpus, esse propositionem veram. Manifestum hinc est conceptum sive cogitationem quæ respondens syllogismo ex propositionibus universalibus in animo existit, nullam esse in iis animalibus quibus deest usus nominum, cum inter syllogizandum oporteat non modo de re sed etiam alternis vicibus de diversis rei nominibus, quæ propter diversas de re cogitationes adhibitæ sunt, cogitare."

153. The metaphysical philosophy of Hobbes, always bold and original, often acute and profound, without producing an immediate school of disciples like that of Descartes, struck, perhaps, a deeper root in the minds of reflecting men, and has influenced more extensively the general tone of speculation. Locke, who had not read much, had certainly read Hobbes, though he does not borrow from him so much as has sometimes been imagined. The French metaphysicians of the next century found him nearer to their own theories than his more celebrated rival in English philosophy. But the writer who has built most upon Hobbes, and may be reckoned, in a certain sense, his commentator, if he who fully explains and develops a system may deserve that name, was Hartley. The theory of association is implied and intimated in many passages of the elder philosopher, though it was first expanded and applied with a diligent, ingenious, and comprehensive research, if sometimes in too forced a manner, by his disciple. I use this word without particular inquiry into the direct acquaintance of Hartley with the writings of Hobbes: the subject had been frequently touched in intermediate publications; and in matters of reasoning, as I have intimated above, little or no presumption of borrowing can be founded on coincidence. Hartley also resembles Hobbes in the extreme to which he has pushed the nominalist theory, in the proneness to materialize all intellectual processes, and either to force all things mysterious to our faculties into something imaginable, or to

say, John is a man; a man feels; we may perhaps have no image in the mind of any man but John. But this is not the case where the predicated quality appertains to many things visibly different from the subject; as in Hobbes's instance, "Animal est Corpus," we may surely consider other animals as being extended and occupying

space besides men. It does not seem that otherwise there could be any ascending scale from particulars to generals, as far as the reasoning faculties, independent of words, are concerned; and, if we begin with the major premise of the syllogism, this will be still more apparent.



reject them as unmeaning, in the want, much connected with this, of a steady perception of the difference between the *Ego* and its objects, in an excessive love of simplifying and generalizing, and in a readiness to adopt explanations neither conformable to reason nor experience, when they fall in with some single principle, the key that was to unlock every ward of the human soul.

154. In nothing does Hobbes deserve more credit than in having set an example of close observation in the philosophy of the human mind. If he errs, he errs like a man who goes a little out of the right track, not like one who has set out in a wrong one. The eulogy of Stewart on Descartes, that he was the father of this experimental psychology, cannot be strictly wrested from him by Hobbes, inasmuch as the publications of the former are of an earlier date; but we may fairly say, that the latter began as soon, and prosecuted his inquiries farther. It seems natural to presume, that Hobbes, who is said to have been employed by Bacon in translating some of his works into Latin, had at least been led by him to the inductive process which he has more than any other employed. But he has seldom mentioned his predecessor's name; and indeed his mind was of a different stamp, — less excursive, less quick in discovering analogies, and less fond of reasoning from them, but more close, perhaps more patient, and more apt to follow up a predominant idea, which sometimes becomes one of the *idola spectus* that deceive him.

## CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY OF MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND OF  
JURISPRUDENCE, FROM 1600 TO 1650.

## SECT. I. — ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

*Elements of the Roman Church*—Suarez on Moral Law—Selden—Charlton—La Mothe le Vayer—Bacon's *Magna*—Faltham—Browne's *Religio Medici*—Other Writers.

1. IN traversing so wide a field as moral and political philosophy, we must still endeavor to distribute the subject according to some order of subdivision, so far at least as the contents of the books themselves which come before us will permit. And we give the first place to those which, relating to the moral law both of nature and revelation, connect the proper subject of the present chapter with that of the second and third.

2. We meet here a concourse of volumes occupying no small space in old libraries,—the writings of the casuists, chiefly within the Romish Church. None perhaps in the whole compass of literature are more neglected by those who do not read with what we may call a professional view; but to the ecclesiastics of that communion they have still a certain value, though far less than when they were first written. The most vital discipline of that church, the secret of the power of its priesthood, the source of most of the good and evil it can work, is found in the confessional: It is there that the keys are kept; it is there that the lamp burns, whose rays diverge to every portion of human life. No church that has relinquished this prerogative can ever establish a permanent dominion over mankind; none that retains it in effective use can lose the hope or the prospect of being their ruler.

3. It is manifest, that, in the common course of this rite, no particular difficulty will arise; nor is the confessor likely to weigh in golden scales the scruples or excuses of ordinary penitents. But peculiar circumstances might be brought before him, wherein there would be a necessity for possessing some rule, lest, by sanctioning the guilt of the self-revealing party, he should incur as much of his own. Treatises, therefore, of casuistry were written as guides to the confessor, and became the text-books in every course of ecclesiastical education. These were commonly digested in a systematic order, and, what is the unfailing consequence of system, or rather almost part of its definition, spread into minute ramifications, and aimed at comprehending every possible emergency. Casuistry is itself allied to jurisprudence, especially to that of the canon law; and it was natural to transfer the subtilty of distinction and copiousness of partition usual with the jurists, to a science which its professors were apt to treat upon very similar principles.

4. The older theologians seem, like the Greek and Roman moralists, when writing systematically, to have made general morality their subject, and casuistry but their illustration. Among the monuments of their ethical philosophy, the *Secunda Secundæ* of Aquinas is the most celebrated. Treatises, however, of casuistry, which is the expansion and application of ethica, may be found both before and during the sixteenth century; and, while the confessional was actively converted to so powerful an engine, they could not conveniently be wanting. Casuistry, indeed, is not much required by the church in an ignorant age; but the sixteenth century was not an age of ignorance. Yet it is not till about the end of that period that we find casuistical literature burst out, so to speak, with a profusion of fruit. "Uninterruptedly afterwards," says Eichhorn, "through the whole seventeenth century, the moral and casuistical literature of the Church of Rome was immensely rich; and it caused a lively and extensive movement in a province which had long been at peace. The first impulse came from the Jesuits, to whom the Jansenists opposed themselves. We must distinguish from both the theological moralists, who remained faithful to their ancient teaching."<sup>1</sup>

5. We may be blamed, perhaps, for obtruding a pedantic

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte der Cultur, vol. vi. part 1. p. 300.

Necessity  
of rules  
for the  
confessor.

Increase of  
casuistical  
literature.

terminology, if we make the most essential distinction in morality, and one for want of which, more than any other, its debatable controversies have arisen, that between the subjective and objective rectitude of actions; in clearer language, between the provinces of conscience and of reason, between what is well meant and what is well done. The chief business of the priest is naturally with the former. The walls of the confessional are privy to the whispers of self-accusing guilt. No doubt can ever arise as to the subjective character of actions which the conscience has condemned, and for which the penitent seeks absolution. Were they even objectively lawful, they are sins in him, according to the unanimous determination of casuists. But though what the conscience reclaims against is necessarily wrong, relatively to the agent, it does not follow that what it may fail to disapprove is innocent. Choose whatever theory we may please as to the moral standard of actions, they must have an objective rectitude of their own, independently of their agent, without which there could be no distinction of right and wrong, nor any scope for the dictates of conscience. The science of ethica, as a science, can only be conversant with objective morality. Casuistry is the instrument of applying this science, which, like every other, is built on reasoning, to the moral nature and volition of man. It rests for its validity on the great principle, that it is our duty to know, as far as lies in us, what is right, as well as to do what we know to be such. But its application was beset with obstacles; the extenuations of ignorance and error were so various, the difficulty of representing the moral position of the penitent to the judgment of the confessor by any process of language so insuperable, that the most acute understanding might be foiled in the task of bringing home a conviction of guilt to the self-deceiving sinner. Again, he might aggravate needless scruples, or disturb the tranquil repose of innocence.

6. But, though past actions are the primary subject of auricular confession, it was a necessary consequence that the priest would be frequently called upon to advise as to the future, to bind or loose the will in incomplete or meditated lines of conduct. And, as all without exception must come before his tribunal, the rich, the noble, the counsellors of princes, and princes themselves, were to reveal their designs, to expound their uncertainties, to call,

Distinction  
of subjective  
and  
objective  
morality.

Directory  
office of  
the con-  
fessor.

in effect, for his sanction in all they might have to do, to secure themselves against transgression by shifting the responsibility on his head. That this tremendous authority of direction, distinct from the rite of penance, though immediately springing from it, should have produced a no more overwhelming influence of the priesthood than it has actually done, great as that has been, can only be ascribed to the re-action of human inclinations which will not be controlled, and of human reason which exerts a silent force against the authority it acknowledges.

7. In the directory business of the confessional, far more <sup>difficulties</sup> than in the penitential, the priest must strive to bring <sup>of casuistry.</sup> about that union between subjective and objective rectitude in which the perfection of a moral act consists; without which, in every instance, according to their tenets, some degree of sinfulness, some liability to punishment, remains, and which must at least be demanded from those who have been made acquainted with their duty. But when he came from the broad lines of the moral law, from the decalogue and the gospel, or even from the ethical systems of theology, to the indescribable variety of circumstance which his penitents had to recount, there arose a multitude of problems, and such as perhaps would most command his attention, when they involved the practice of the great, to which he might hesitate to apply an unbending rule. The questions of casuistry, like those of jurisprudence, were often found to turn on the great and ancient doubt of both sciences, whether we should abide by the letter of a general law, or let in an equitable interpretation of its spirit. The consulting party would be apt to plead for the one: the guide of conscience would more securely adhere to the other. But he might also perceive the severity of those rules of obligation which conduce, in the particular instance, to no apparent end, or even defeat their own principle. Hence there arose two schools of casuistry, first in the practice of confession, and afterwards in the books intended to assist it: one strict and uncompromising; the other more indulgent, and flexible to circumstances.

8. The characteristics of these systems were displayed in almost the whole range of morals. They were, however, chiefly seen in the rules of veracity, and especially in promissory obligations. According to the fathers of the church, and to the rigid casuists in general, a

Strict and  
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lie was never to be uttered, a promise was never to be broken. The precepts, especially of revelation, notwithstanding their brevity and figurativeness, were held complete and literal. Hence promises obtained by mistake, fraud, or force, and, above all, gratuitous vows, where God was considered as the promisee, however lightly made, or become intolerably onerous by supervenient circumstances, were strictly to be fulfilled, unless the dispensing power of the church might sometimes be sufficient to release them. Besides the respect due to moral rules, and especially those of Scripture, there had been from early times in the Christian Church a strong disposition to the ascetic scheme of religious morality; a prevalent notion of the intrinsic meritoriousness of voluntary self-denial, which discountenanced all regard in man to his own happiness, at least in this life, as a sort of flinching from the discipline of suffering. And this had doubtless its influence upon the severe casuists.

9. But there had not been wanting those, who, whatever course they might pursue in the confessional, found the convenience of an accommodating morality in the <sup>Convenience of the latter.</sup> secular affairs of the church. Oaths were broken, engagements entered into without faith, for the ends of the clergy, or of those whom they favored in the struggles of the world. And some of the ingenious sophistry, by which these breaches of plain rules are usually defended, was not unknown before the Reformation. But casuistical writings at that time were comparatively few. The Jesuits have the credit of first rendering public a scheme of false morals, which has been denominated from them; and enhanced the obloquy that overwhelmed their order. Their volumes of casuistry were exceedingly numerous: some of them belong to the last twenty years of the sixteenth, but a far greater part to the following century.

10. The Jesuits were prone for several reasons to embrace the laxer theories of obligation. They were less <sup>Favored by</sup> tainted than the old monastic orders with that <sup>the Jesuits</sup> superstition which had flowed into the church from the East, — the meritoriousness of self-inflicted suffering for its own sake. They embraced a life of toil and danger, but not of habitual privation and pain. Dauntless in death and torture, they shunned the mechanical asceticism of the convent. And, secondly, their eyes were bent on a great end, — the go

Catholic Church, which they identified with that of their own order. It almost invariably happens, that men who have the good of mankind at heart, and actively prosecute it, become embarrassed, at some time or other, by the conflict of particular duties with the best method of promoting their object. An unaccommodating veracity, an unswerving good faith, will often appear to stand, or stand really, in the way of their ends: and hence the little confidence we repose in enthusiasts, even when, in a popular mode of speaking, they are most sincere; that is, most convinced of the rectitude of their aim.

11. The course prescribed by Loyola led his disciples, not to solitude, but to the world. They became the associates and counsellors, as well as the confessors, of the great. They had to wield the powers of the earth for the service of heaven. Hence, in confession itself, they were often tempted to look beyond the penitent, and to guide his conscience rather with a view to his usefulness than his integrity. In questions of morality, to abstain from action is generally the means of innocence; but to act is indispensable for positive good. Thus their casuistry had a natural tendency to become more objective, and to entangle the responsibility of personal conscience in an inextricable maze of reasoning. They had also to retain their influence over men not wholly submissive to religious control, nor ready to abjure the pleasant paths in which they trod; men of the court and the city, who might serve the church, though they did not adorn it, and for whom it was necessary to make some compromise in furtherance of the main design.

12. It must also be fairly admitted, that the rigid casuists went to extravagant lengths. Their decisions were often not only harsh, but unsatisfactory: the reason demanded in vain a principle of their iron law; and the common sense of mankind imposed the limitations, which they were incapable of excluding by any thing better than a dogmatic assertion. Thus, in the cases of promissory obligation, they were compelled to make some exceptions; and these left it open to rational inquiry whether more might not be found. They diverged unnecessarily, as many thought, from the principles of jurisprudence: for the jurists built their determinations, or professed to do so, on what was just and equitable among men; and though a distinction, frequently very right, was taken between the *forum*

Extravagance of the strict casuists.

*exterius* and *interius*, the provinces of jurisprudence and casuistry, yet the latter could not, in these questions of mutual obligation, rest upon wholly different ground from the former.

13. The Jesuits, however, fell rapidly into the opposite extreme. Their subtilty in logic, and great ingenuity in devising arguments, were employed in sophisms that undermined the foundations of moral integrity in the heart. They warred with these arms against the conscience which they were bound to protect. The offences of their casuistry, as charged by their adversaries, are very multifarious. One of the most celebrated is the doctrine of equivocation; the innocence of saying that which is true in a sense meant by the speaker, though he is aware that it will be otherwise understood. Another is that of what was called probability; according to which it is lawful, in doubtful problems of morality, to take the course which appears to ourselves least likely to be right, provided any one casuistical writer of good repute has approved it. The multiplicity of books, and want of uniformity in their decisions, made this a broad path for the conscience. In the latter instance, as in many others, the *subjective* nature of moral obligation was lost sight of; and to this the scientific treatment of casuistry inevitably contributed.

Opposite  
faults of  
Jesuits.

14. Productions so little regarded as those of the jesuitical casuists cannot be dwelt upon. Thomas Sanchez of Cordova is author of a large treatise on matrimony, published in 1592; the best, as far as the canon law is concerned, which has yet been published. But in the casuistical portion of this work the most extraordinary indecencies occur, such as have consigned it to general censure.<sup>1</sup> Some of these, it must be owned, belong to the rite of auricular confession itself, as managed in the Church of Rome, though they give scandal by their publication and apparent excess beyond the necessity of the case. The *Summa Casuum Conscientiæ* of Toletus, a Spanish Jesuit and cardinal, which, though published in 1602, belongs to the sixteenth century; and the casuistical writings of Less, Busenbaum, and Escobar, may just be here mentioned. The *Medulla Casuum Conscientiæ* of the second (Munster, 1645) went through fifty-two editions; the *Theolo-*

<sup>1</sup> Bayle, art. "Sanchez," expatiates on this, and condemns the Jesuit; Cellarius *De Matrimonio* are castigate.

Cethegum. The later editions of Sanchez

gia Moralis of the last (Lyon, 1646), through forty.<sup>1</sup> Of the opposition excited by the laxity in moral rules ascribed to the Jesuits, though it began in some manner during this period, we shall have more to say in the next.

15. Suarez of Granada, by far the greatest man in the department of moral philosophy whom the order of Loyola produced in this age, or perhaps in any other, may not improbably have treated of casuistry in some part of his numerous volumes. We shall, however, gladly leave this subject to bring before the reader a large treatise of Suarez on the principles of natural law, as well as of all positive jurisprudence. This is entitled *Tractatus de Legibus ac Deo Legislatore* in decem Libros distributus, utriusque Fori Homibus non minus utilis, quam necessarius. It might with no great impropriety, perhaps, be placed in any of the three sections of this chapter, relating not only to moral philosophy, but to politics in some degree, and to jurisprudence.

16. Suarez begins by laying down the position, that all titles of his ten books. legislative as well as all paternal power is derived from God, and that the authority of every law resolves itself into his. For either the law proceeds immediately from God, or, if it be human, it proceeds from man as his vicar and minister. The titles of the ten books of this large treatise are as follows: 1. On the nature of law in general, and on its causes and consequences; 2. On eternal, natural law, and that of nations; 3. On positive human law in itself considered relatively to human nature, which is also called civil law; 4. On positive ecclesiastical law; 5. On the differences of human laws, and especially of those that are penal, or in the nature of penal; 6. On the interpretation, the alteration, and the abolition of human laws; 7. On unwritten law, which is called custom; 8. On those human laws which are called favorable, or privileges; 9. On the positive divine law of the old dispensations; 10. On the positive divine law of the new dispensation.

17. This is a very comprehensive chart of general law, and entitles Suarez to be accounted such a precursor of Heads of the second book. Grotius and Puffendorf as occupied most of their ground, especially that of the latter, though he cultivated it in a different manner. His volume is a closely printed folio of 700 pages in double columns. The following

<sup>1</sup> Ranko, die Päpste, vol. III.

heads of chapters in the second book will show the questions in which Suarez dealt, and, in some degree, his method of stating and conducting them: 1. Whether there be any eternal law, and what is its necessity; 2. On the subject of eternal law, and on the acts it commands; 3. In what act the eternal law exists (*existit*), and whether it be one or many; 4. Whether the eternal law be the cause of other laws, and obligatory through their means; 5. In what natural law consists; 6. Whether natural law be a preceptive divine law; 7. On the subject of natural law, and on its precepts; 8. Whether natural law be one; 9. Whether natural law bind the conscience; 10. Whether natural law obliges not only to the act (*actus*) but to the mode (*modum*) of virtue, — this obscure question seems to refer to the subjective nature, or motive, of virtuous actions, as appears by the next; 11. Whether natural law obliges us to act from love or charity (*ad modum operandi ex caritate*); 12. Whether natural law not only prohibits certain actions, but invalidates them when done; 13. Whether the precepts of the law of nature are intrinsically immutable; 14. Whether any human authority can alter or dispense with the natural law; 15. Whether God by his absolute power can dispense with the law of nature; 16. Whether an equitable interpretation can ever be admitted in the law of nature; 17. Whether the law of nature is distinguishable from that of nations; 18. Whether the law of nations enjoins or forbids any thing; 19. By what means we are to distinguish the law of nature from that of nations; 20. Certain corollaries; and that the law of nations is both just, and also mutable.

18. These heads may give some slight notion to the reader of the character of the book; as the book itself may serve as a typical instance of that form of theology, of metaphysics, of ethics, of jurisprudence, which occupies the unread and unreadable folios of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially those issuing from the Church of Rome, and may be styled generally the scholastic method. Two remarkable characteristics strike us in these books, which are sufficiently to be judged by reading their table of contents, and by taking occasional samples of different parts. The extremely systematic form they assume, and the multiplicity of divisions, render this practice more satisfactory than it can be in works of less regular

Character  
of such  
scholastic  
treatises.



arrangement. One of these characteristics is that spirit of system itself; and another is their sincere desire to exhaust the subject by presenting it to the mind in every light, and by tracing all its relations and consequences. The fertility of those men who, like Suarez, superior to most of the rest, were trained in the scholastic discipline, to which I refer the methods of the canonists and casuists, is sometimes surprising: their views are not one-sided; they may not solve objections to our satisfaction, but they seldom suppress them; they embrace a vast compass of thought and learning; they write less for the moment, and are less under the influence of local and temporary prejudices, than many who have lived in better ages of philosophy. But, again, they have great defects; their distinctions confuse instead of giving light; their systems, being not founded on clear principles, become embarrassed and incoherent; their method is not always sufficiently consecutive; the difficulties which they encounter are too arduous for them; they labor under the multitude, and are entangled by the discordance of their authorities.

19. Suarez, who discusses all these important problems of his second book with acuteness, and, for his circumstances, with an independent mind, is weighed down by the extent and nature of his learning. If Grotius quotes philosophers and poets too frequently, what can we say of the perpetual reference to Aquinas, Cajetan, Soto, Turrecremata, Vasquius, Isidore, Vincent of Beauvais or Alensis, not to mention the canonists and fathers, which Suarez employs to prove or disprove every proposition? The syllogistic forms are unsparingly introduced. Such writers as Soto or Suarez held all kinds of ornament not less unfit for philosophical argument than they would be for geometry. Nor do they ever appeal to experience or history for the rules of determination. Their materials are nevertheless abundant, consisting of texts of Scripture, sayings of the fathers and schoolmen, established theorems in natural theology and metaphysics, from which they did not find it hard to select premises, which, duly arranged, gave them conclusions.

20. Suarez, after a prolix discussion, comes to the conclusion, that "eternal law is the free determination of the will of God, ordaining a rule to be observed, either, first, generally by all parts of the universe as a means of a common good, whether immediately

Quota-  
tions of  
Suarez.

His defi-  
nition of  
eternal  
law.

belonging to it in respect of the entire universe, or at least in respect of the singular parts thereof; or, secondly, to be specially observed by intellectual creatures in respect of their free operations."<sup>1</sup> This is not instantly perspicuous; but definitions of a complex nature cannot be rendered such. It is true, however, what the reader may think curious, that this crabbed piece of scholasticism is nothing else, in substance, than the celebrated sentence on law, which concludes the first book of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity. Whoever takes the pains to understand Suarez, will perceive that he asserts exactly that which is unrolled in the majestic eloquence of our countryman.

21. By this eternal law, God is not necessarily bound. But this seems to be said rather for the sake of avoiding phrases which were conventionally rejected by the scholastic theologians, since, in effect, his theory requires the affirmative, as we shall soon perceive; and he here says that the law is God himself (*Deus ipse*), and is immutable. This eternal law is not immediately known to man in this life, but either "in other laws, or through them," which he thus explains: "Men, while pilgrims here (*viatores homines*), cannot learn the divine will in itself, but only as much as by certain signs or effects is proposed to them; and hence it is peculiar to the blessed in heaven, that, contemplating the divine will, they are ruled by it as by a direct law. The former know the eternal law, because they partake of it by other laws, temporal and positive; for, as second causes display the first, and creatures the Creator, so temporal laws (by which he means laws respective of man on earth), being streams from that eternal law, manifest the fountain whence they spring. Yet all do not arrive even at this degree of knowledge; for all are not able to infer the cause from the effect. And thus, though all men necessarily perceive some participation of the eternal laws in themselves, since there is no one endowed with reason who does not in some manner acknowledge, that what is morally good ought to be chosen, and what is evil rejected, so that in this sense men have all some notion of

<sup>1</sup> "Legem eternam esse decretum liberum voluntatis Dei statuentis ordinem servandum, aut generaliter ab omnibus partibus universi in ordine ad commune bonum, vel immediate illi conveniens ratione totius universi, vel saltem ratione

singularum specierum ejus, aut specialiter servandum a creaturis intellectualibus quoad liberos operationes earum." — C. 3, § 6. Compare with Hooker: *Of Law*, no less can be said, than that her throne is the bosom of God, &c

not with much ability. His distinctions are more than usually feeble. Thus usury is a deadly sin: but it is very difficult to commit it, unless we love the sin for its own sake; for almost every possible case of lending money will be found, by his limitations of the rule, to justify the taking a profit for the loan.<sup>1</sup> His casuistry about selling goods is of the same description: a man must take no advantage of the scarcity of the commodity, unless there should be just reason to raise the price, which he admits to be often the case in a scarcity. He concludes by observing, that in this, as in other well-ordered nations, it would be a happy thing to have a regulation of prices. He decides, as all the old casuists did, that a promise extorted by a robber is binding. Sunderson was the most celebrated of the English casuists. His treatise *De Juramenti Obligatione* appeared in 1647.

25. Though no proper treatise of moral philosophy came from any English writer in this period, we have one which must be placed in this class; strangely as the subject has been handled by its distinguished author. Selden published in 1640 his learned work, *De Jure Naturali et Gentium juxta Disciplinam Ebræorum*.<sup>2</sup> The object of the author was to trace the opinions of the Jews on the law of nature and nations, or of moral obligation, as distinct from the Mosaic law; the former being a law to which they held all mankind to be bound. This theme had been, of course, untouched by the Greek and Roman philosophers, nor was much to be found upon it in modern writers. His purpose is therefore rather historical than argumentative; but he seems so generally to adopt the Jewish theory of natural law, that we may consider him the disciple of the rabbis as much as their historian.

26. The origin of natural law was not drawn by the Jews, as some of the jurists imagined it ought to be, from the habits and instincts of all animated beings, "*quod natura omnia animalia docuit*," according to the definition of the Pandects. Nor did they deem, as many have done, the consent of mankind and common customs of nations to be a sufficient basis for so permanent and invariable a standard. Upon the discrepancy of moral

<sup>1</sup> Hall's Works (edit. Pratt), vol. viii. p. 375.

<sup>2</sup> *Juxta* for *secundum*, we need hardly say, is bad Latin: it was, however, very

common, and is even used by Joseph Scaliger, as Voetius mentions, in his treatise *De Vitiis Sermonis*.

Jewish  
theory of  
natural  
law.

sentiments and practices among mankind, Selden enlarges in the tone which Sextus Empiricus had taught scholars, and which the world had learned from Montaigne. Nor did unassisted reason seem equal to determine moral questions, both from its natural feebleness, and because reason alone does not create an obligation, which depends wholly on the command of a superior.<sup>1</sup> But God, as the ruler of the universe, has partly implanted in our minds, partly made known to us by exterior revelation, his own will, which is our law. These positions he illustrates with a superb display of erudition, especially Oriental, and certainly with more prolixity, and less regard to opposite reasonings, than we should desire.

27. The Jewish writers concur in maintaining, that certain short precepts of moral duty were orally enjoined by God on the parent of mankind, and afterwards on the sons of Noah. Whether these were simply preserved by tradition, or whether, by an innate moral faculty, mankind had the power of constantly discerning them, seems to have been an unsettled point. The principal of these divine rules are called, for distinction, The Seven Precepts of the Sons of Noah. There is, however, some variance in the lists, as Selden has given them from the ancient writers. That most received consists of seven prohibitions; namely, of idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, theft, rebellion, and cutting a limb from a living animal. The last of these, the sense of which, however, is controverted, as well as the third, but no other, are indicated in the ninth chapter of Genesis.

Seven Precepts of the Sons of Noah.

28. Selden pours forth his unparalleled stores of erudition on all these subjects, and upon those which are suggested in the course of his explanations. These digressions are by no means the least useful part of his long treatise. They elucidate some obscure passages of Scripture. But the whole work belongs far more to theological than to philosophical investigation; and I have placed it here chiefly out of conformity to usage: for undoubtedly Selden, though a man of very strong reasoning faculties, had not greatly turned them to the principles of natural

Character of Selden's work.

<sup>1</sup> Selden says, in his Table Talk, that he can understand no law of nature, but a law of God. He might mean this in

the sense of Suarez, without denying an intrinsic distinction of right and wrong.



law. His reliance on the testimony of Jewish writers, many of them by no means ancient, for those primeval traditions as to the sons of Noah, was in the character of his times; but it will scarcely suit the more rigid criticism of our own. His book, however, is excellent for its proper purpose, that of representing Jewish opinion; and is among the greatest achievements in erudition that any English writer has performed.

29. The moral theories of Grotius and Hobbes are so much interwoven with other parts of their philosophy, in the treatise *De Jure Belli* and in the *Leviathan*, that it would be dissecting those works too much, were we to separate what is merely ethical from what falls within the provinces of politics and jurisprudence. The whole must therefore be reserved for the ensuing sections of this chapter. Nor is there much in the writings of Bacon or of Descartes which falls, in the sense we have hitherto been considering it, under the class of moral philosophy. We may, therefore, proceed to another description of books, relative to the passions and manners of mankind, rather than, in a strict sense, to their duties; though of course there will frequently be some intermixture of subjects so intimately allied.

30. In the year 1601, Peter Charron, a French ecclesiastic, published his treatise on Wisdom. The reputation of this work has been considerable: his countrymen are apt to name him with Montaigne; and Pope has given him the epithet of "more wise" than his predecessor, on account, as Warburton expresses it, of his "moderating everywhere the extravagant Pyrrhonism of his friend." It is admitted that he has copied freely from the *Essays* of Montaigne: in fact, a very large portion of the treatise on Wisdom, not less, I should conjecture, than one-fourth, is extracted from them with scarce any verbal alteration. It is not the case that he moderates the sceptical tone which he found there; on the contrary, the most remarkable passages of that kind have been transcribed: but we must do Charron the justice to say, that he has retrenched the indecencies, the egotism, and the superfluities. Charron does not dissemble his debts. "This," he says in his preface, "is a collection of a part of my studies: the form and method are my own. What I have taken from others I have put in their words, not being able to say it better than they have done." In the political



part, he has borrowed copiously from Lipsius and Bodin; and he is said to have obligations to Duvair.<sup>1</sup> The ancients also must have contributed their share. It becomes, therefore, difficult to estimate the place of Charron as a philosopher, because we feel a good deal of uncertainty whether any passage may be his own. He appears to have been a man formed in the school of Montaigne, not much less bold in pursuing the novel opinions of others, but less fertile in original thoughts, so that he often falls into the commonplaces of ethics; with more reading than his model, with more disciplined habits, as well of arranging and distributing his subject, as of observing the sequence of an argument; but, on the other hand, with far less of ingenuity in thinking, and of sprightliness of language.

81. A writer of rather less extensive celebrity than Charron belongs full as much to the school of Montaigne, though he does not so much pillage his Essays. This was La Mothe le Vayer, a man distinguished by his literary character in the court of Louis XIII., and ultimately preceptor both to the Duke of Orleans and the young king (Louis XIV.) himself. La Mothe was habitually and universally a sceptic. Among several smaller works, we may chiefly instance his Dialogues, published many years after his death, under the name of Horatius Tubero. They must have been written in the reign of Louis XIII., and belong, therefore, to the present period. In attacking every established doctrine, especially in religion, he goes much farther than Montaigne, and seems to have taken some of his metaphysical system immediately from Sextus Empiricus. He is profuse of quotation, especially in a dialogue entitled *Le Banquet Sceptique*, the aim of which is to show that there is no uniform taste of mankind as to their choice of food. His mode of arguing against the moral sense is entirely that of Montaigne; or, if there be any difference, is more full of the two fallacies by which that lively writer deceives himself: namely, the accumulating examples of things arbitrary and fanciful, such as modes of dress and conventional usages, with respect to which no one pretends that any natural law can be found; and, when he comes to subjects more truly moral, the turning our attention solely to the external action, and not to the motive or principle, which, under different circumstances, may prompt men to opposite courses.

La Mothe  
le Vayer:  
his Dia-  
logues.

<sup>1</sup> *Biogr. Universelle*

32. These dialogues are not displeasing to read, and exhibit a polite though rather pedantic style, not uncommon in the seventeenth century. They are, however, very diffuse; and the sceptical paradoxes become merely commonplaces by repetition. One of them is more grossly indecent than any part of Montaigne. La Mothe le Vayer is not, on the whole, much to be admired as a philosopher: little appears to be his own, and still less is really good. He contributed, no question, as much as any one, to the irreligion, and contempt for morality, prevailing in that court where he was in high reputation. Some other works of this author may be classed under the same description.

33. We can hardly refer Lord Bacon's Essays to the school of Montaigne, though their title may lead us to suspect that they were in some measure suggested by that most popular writer. The first edition, containing ten essays only, and those much shorter than as we now possess them, appeared, as has been already mentioned, in 1597. They were reprinted with very little variation in 1606. But the enlarged work was published in 1612, and dedicated to Prince Henry. He calls them, in this dedication, "certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously, which I have called Essays. The word is late, but the thing is ancient; for Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius, if you mark them well, are but essays, that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles." The resemblance, at all events, to Montaigne, is not greater than might be expected in two men equally original in genius, and entirely opposite in their characters and circumstances. One, by an instinctive felicity, catches some of the characteristics of human nature; the other, by profound reflection, scrutinizes and dissects it. One is too negligent for the inquiring reader, the other too formal and sententious for one who seeks to be amused. We delight in one, we admire the other; but this admiration has also its own delight. In one we find more of the sweet temper and tranquil contemplation of Plutarch; in the other, more of the practical wisdom and somewhat ambitious prospects of Seneca. It is characteristic of Bacon's philosophical writings, that they have in them a spirit of movement, a perpetual reference to what man is to do in order to an end, rather than to his mere speculation upon what is. In his Essays, this is naturally still more prominent. They are.

quaintly described in the titlepage of the first edition, "places (*loci*) of persuasion and dissuasion;" counsels for those who would be great as well as wise. They are such as sprang from a mind ardent in two kinds of ambition, and hesitating whether to found a new philosophy, or to direct the vessel of the state. We perceive, however, that the immediate reward attending greatness, as is almost always the case, gave it a preponderance in his mind; and hence his Essays are more often political than moral: they deal with mankind, not in their general faculties or habits, but in their mutual strife; their endeavors to rule others, or to avoid their rule. He is more cautious and more comprehensive, though not more acute, than Machiavel, who often becomes too dogmatic through the habit of referring every thing to a particular aspect of political societies. Nothing in the Prince or the discourses on Livy is superior to the Essays on Seditions, on Empire, on Innovations, or generally those which bear on the dexterous management of a people by their rulers. Both these writers have what to our more liberal age appears a counselling of governors for their own rather than their subjects' advantage; but as this is generally represented to be the best means, though not, as it truly is, the real end, their advice tends, on the whole, to promote the substantial benefits of government.

34. The transcendent strength of Bacon's mind is visible in the whole tenor of these Essays, unequal as they must be from the very nature of such compositions. Their excellence. They are deeper and more discriminating than any earlier, or almost any later, work in the English language, full of recondite observation, long matured and carefully sifted. It is true, that we might wish for more vivacity and ease. Bacon, who had much wit, had little gaiety; his Essays are consequently stiff and grave, where the subject might have been touched with a lively hand: thus it is in those on Garden and on Building. The sentences have sometimes too apophthegmatic a form, and want of coherence; the historical instances, though far less frequent than with Montaigne, have a little the look of pedantry to our eyes. But it is from this condensation, from this gravity, that the work derives its peculiar impressiveness. Few books are more quoted; and, what is not always the case with such books, we may add, that few are more generally read. In this respect, they lead the

van of our prose literature : for no gentleman is ashamed of owning that he has not read the Elizabethan writers ; but it would be somewhat derogatory to a man of the slightest claim to polite letters, were he unacquainted with the *Essays of Bacon*. It is, indeed, little worth while to read this or any other book for reputation's sake ; but very few in our language so well repay the pains, or afford more nourishment to the thoughts. They might be judiciously introduced, with a small number more, into a sound method of education, — one that should make wisdom, rather than mere knowledge, its object ; and might become a text-book of examination in our schools.

35. It is rather difficult to fix upon the fittest place for bringing forward some books, which, though moral in their subject, belong to the general literature of the age ; and we might strip the province of polite letters of what have been reckoned its chief ornaments. I shall therefore select here such only as are more worthy of consideration for their matter than for the style in which it is delivered. Several that might range, more or less, under the denomination of moral essays, were published both in English and in other languages. But few of them are now read, or even much known by name. One, which has made a better fortune than the rest, demands mention, — the *Resolves of Owen Feltham's* *Resolves*. Of this book, the first part of which was published in 1627, the second not till after the middle of the century, it is not uncommon to meet with high praises in those modern writers who profess a faithful allegiance to our older literature. For myself, I can only say that Feltham appears not only a labored and artificial, but a shallow writer. Among his many faults, none strikes me more than a want of depth, which his pointed and sententious manner renders more ridiculous. There are certainly exceptions to this vacuity of original meaning in Feltham : it would be possible to fill a few pages with extracts not undeserving of being read, with thoughts just and judicious, though never deriving much lustre from his diction. He is one of our worst writers in point of style ; with little vigor, he has less elegance ; his English is impure to an excessive degree, and full of words unauthorized by any usage. Pedantry, and the novel phrases which Greek and Latin etymology was supposed to warrant, appear in most productions of this period ; but Feltham attempted to bend the English idiom to his own affectations



The moral reflections of a serious and thoughtful mind are generally pleasing; and to this, perhaps, is partly owing the kind of popularity which the *Resolves of Feltham* have obtained; but they may be had more agreeably and profitably in other books.<sup>1</sup>

36. A superior genius to that of Feltham is exhibited in the *Religio Medici* of Sir Thomas Browne. This little book made a remarkable impression: it was soon translated into several languages, and is highly extolled by Conringius and others, who could only judge through these versions. Patin, though he rather slights it himself, tells us in one of his letters that it was very popular at Paris. The character which Johnson has given of the *Religio Medici* is well known; and, though perhaps rather too favorable, appears, in general, just.<sup>2</sup> The mind of Browne was fertile, and, according to the current use of the word, ingenious; his analogies are original, and sometimes brilliant; and, as his learning is also in things out of the beaten path, this gives a peculiar and uncommon air to all his writings, and especially to the *Religio Medici*. He was, however, far removed from real philosophy, both by his turn of mind and by the nature of his erudition: he seldom reasons; his thoughts are desultory; sometimes he appears sceptical or paradoxical; but credulity, and deference to authority, prevail. He belonged to the class, numerous at that time in our church, who halted between Popery and Protestantism; and this gives him, on all such topics, an appearance of vacilla-

Browne's  
*Religio  
Medici*.

<sup>1</sup> This is a random sample of Feltham's style: "Of all objects of sorrow, a distressed king is the most pitiful, because it presents us most the frailty of humanity, and cannot but meet midnight the soul of him that is fallen. The sorrows of a deposed King are like the *distorsements* of a *distorted* conscience, which none can know but he that hath lost a crown."—*Ibid.* i. 61. We find, not long after, the following precious phrase: "The nature that is *acted* with the subtleties of time and practice."—*Ibid.* 63. In one page we have *ambulate*, *acted*, *parallel* (as a scale), *falls* (fallings), *uncertain*, *depraving* (recommending). *Ibid.* 59. And we are to be disgusted with such vile English, or properly no English, for the sake of the sleepy saws of a trivial morality. Such defects are not compensated by the better and more striking thoughts we may occasionally light upon. In reading Feltham,

nevertheless, I seemed to perceive some resemblance to the tone and way of thinking of the Turkish Spy, which is a great compliment to the former: for the Turkish Spy is neither disagreeable nor superficial. The resemblance must lie in a certain contemplative melancholy, rather serious than severe, in respect to the world and its ways; and as Feltham's *Resolves* seem to have a charm, by the editions they have gone through and the good name they have gained, I can only look for it in this.

<sup>2</sup> "The *Religio Medici* was no sooner published than it excited the attention of the public by the novelty of paradoxes, the dignity of sentiment, the quick succession of images, the multitude of abstruse allusions, the subtlety of disquisition, and the strength of language."—*Life of Browne* (in Johnson's Works, *vol.* 276).



tion and irresoluteness, which probably represents the real state of his mind. His paradoxes do not seem very original; nor does he arrive at them by any process of argument: they are more like traces of his reading casually suggesting themselves, and supported by his own ingenuity. His style is not flowing, but vigorous; his choice of words not elegant, and even approaching to barbarism as English phrase: yet there is an impressiveness, an air of reflection and sincerity, in Browne's writings, which redeem many of their faults. His egotism is equal to that of Montaigne; but with this difference, that it is the egotism of a melancholy mind, which generally becomes unpleasing. This melancholy temperament is characteristic of Browne. "Let's talk of graves and worms and epitaphs" seems his motto. His best-written work, the *Hydriotaphia*, is expressly an essay on sepulchral urns; but the same taste for the circumstances of mortality leavens also the *Religio Medici*.

37. The thoughts of Sir Walter Raleigh on moral prudence are few, but precious. And some of the bright sallies of Selden recorded in his *Table Talk* are of the same description, though the book is too miscellaneous to fall under any single head of classification. The editor of this very short and small volume, which gives, perhaps, a more exalted notion of Selden's natural talents than any of his learned writings, requests the reader to distinguish times, and, "in his fancy, to carry along with him the when and the why many of these things were spoken." This intimation accounts for the different spirit in which he may seem to combat the follies of the prelates at one time, and of the Presbyterians or fanatics at another. These sayings are not always, apparently, well reported: some seem to have been misunderstood, and, in others, the limiting clauses to have been forgotten. But, on the whole, they are full of vigor, raciness, and a kind of scorn of the half-learned, far less rude, but more cutting, than that of Scaliger. It has been said that the *Table Talk* of Selden is worth all the *Ana* of the Continent. In this I should be disposed to concur; but they are not exactly works of the same class.

38. We must now descend much lower, and could find little worth remembering. Osborn's *Advice to his Son* may be reckoned among the moral and political writings of this period. It is not very far above mediocrity,

Osborn's  
Advice to  
his Son

and contains a good deal that is commonplace, yet with a considerable sprinkling of sound sense and observation. The style is rather apophthegmatic, though by no means more so than was then usual.

39. A few books, English as well as foreign, are purposely deferred for the present. I am rather apprehensive that I shall be found to have overlooked some, not unworthy of notice. One, written in Latin by a German writer, has struck me as displaying a spirit which may claim for it a place among the livelier and lighter class, though with serious intent, of moral essays. John Valentine Andreæ was a man above his age, and a singular contrast to the narrow and pedantic herd of German scholars and theologians. He regarded all things around him with a sarcastic but benevolent philosophy, keen in exposing the errors of mankind, yet only for the sake of amending them. It has been supposed by many that he invented the existence of the famous Rosicrucian society, not so much probably for the sake of mystification, as to suggest an institution so praiseworthy and philanthropic as he delineated for the imitation of mankind. This, however, is still a debated problem in Germany.<sup>1</sup> But, among his numerous writings, that alone of which I know any thing is entitled, in the original Latin, *Mythologie Christianæ, sive Virtutum et Vitiæ Humanæ Imaginum, Libri Tres* (Strasburg, 1618). Herder has translated a part of this book in the fifth volume of his *Zerstreute Blätter*; and it is here that I have met with it. Andreæ wrote, I believe, solely in Latin; and his works appear to be scarce, at least in England. These short apologues, which Herder has called *Parables*, are written with uncommon terseness of language, a happy and original vein of invention, and a philosophy looking down on common life without ostentation and without passion. He came, too, before Bacon; but he had learned to scorn the disputes of the schools, and had sought for truth with an entire love, even at the hands of Cardan and Campanella. I will give a specimen, in a note, of the peculiar manner of Andreæ; but my translation does not perhaps justice to that of Herder. The idea, it may be observed, is now become more trite.<sup>2</sup>

John  
Valentine  
Andreæ.

<sup>1</sup> Brucker, iv. 735; Biogr. Univ., art.

<sup>2</sup> Andreæ, *et alibi*.

<sup>3</sup> "The Pen and the Sword strove with

each other for superiority, and the voices of the judges were divided. The men of learning talked much, and persuaded

## SECT. II.—ON POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

*Change in the Character of Political Writings—Bellenden and others—Patriarchal Theory refuted by Suarez—Althusius—Political Economy of Serra—Hobbes, and Analysis of his Political Treatises.*

40. THE recluse philosopher, who, like Descartes in his country-house near Utrecht, investigates the properties of quantity, or the operations of the human mind, while nations are striving for conquest, and factions for ascendancy, hears that tumultuous uproar but as the dash of the ocean waves at a distance; and it may even serve, like music that falls upon the poet's ear, to wake in him some new truth of high thought, or, at the least, to confirm his love of the absolute and the eternal, by comparison with the imperfection and error that beset the world. Such is the serene temple of philosophy, which the Roman poet has contrasted with the storm and the battle, with the passions of the great and the many, the perpetual struggle of man against his fellows. But if he who might dwell on this vantage-ground descends into the plain, and takes so near a view of the world's strife that he sees it as a whole very imperfectly, while the parts to which he approaches are magnified beyond their proportion; if especially he mingles with the combat, and shares its hopes and its perils, though in many respects he may know more than those who keep aloof,—he will lose something of that faculty of equal and compre-

many: the men of arms were fierce, and compelled many to join their side. Thus nothing could be determined: it followed that both were left to fight it out, and settle their dispute in single combat.

"On one side, books rustled in the libraries; on the other, arms rattled in the arsenals: men looked on in hope and fear, and waited the end.

"The Pen, consecrated to truth, was notorious for much falsehood; the Sword, a servant of God, was stained with innocent blood: both hoped for the aid of Heaven; both found its wrath.

"The State, which had need of both, and disliked the manners of both, would put on the appearance of caring for the weak and woe of neither. The Pen was weak, but quick, glib, well exercised, and very bold, when one provoked it. The

Sword was stern, implacable, but less compact and subtle: so that on both sides the victory remained uncertain. At length, for the security of both, the common weal pronounced that both in turn should stand by her side and bear with each other. For that only is a happy country where the Pen and the Sword are faithful servants, not where either governs by its arbitrary will and passion."

If the touches in this little piece are not always clearly laid on, it may be ascribed as much, perhaps, to their having passed through two translations, as to the fault of the excellent writer. But, in this early age, we seldom find the entire neatness and felicity which later times attained.

heensive vision in which the philosophical temper consists. Such has very frequently, or more or less perhaps in almost every instance, been the fate of the writer on general politics : if his pen has not been solely employed with a view to the questions that engage attention in his own age, it has generally been guided in a certain degree by regard to them.

41. In the sixteenth century, we have seen that notions of popular rights, and of the admissibility of sovereign power for misconduct, were alternately broached by the two great religious parties of Europe, according to the necessity in which they stood for such weapons against their adversaries. Passive obedience was preached as a duty by the victorious : rebellion was claimed as a right by the vanquished. The history of France and England, and partly of other countries, was the clew to these politics. But, in the following period, a more tranquil state of public opinion, and a firmer hand upon the reins of power, put an end to such books as those of Languet, Buchanan, Rose, and Mariana. The last of these, by the vindication of tyrannicide, in his treatise *De Rege*, contributed to bring about a re-action in political literature. The Jesuits in France, whom Henry IV. was inclined to favor, publicly condemned the doctrine of Mariana in 1606. A Book by Becanus, and another by Suarez, justifying regicide, were condemned by the Parliament of Paris in 1612.<sup>1</sup> The assassination, indeed, of Henry IV., committed by one, not perhaps, metaphysically speaking, sane, but whose aberration of intellect had evidently been either brought on or nourished by the pernicious theories of that school, created such an abhorrence of the doctrine, that neither the Jesuits nor others ventured afterwards to teach it. Those also who magnified, as far as circumstances would permit, the alleged supremacy of the see of Rome over temporal princes, were little inclined to set up, like Mariana, a popular sovereignty, a right of the multitude not emanating from the church, and to which the church itself might one day be under the necessity of submitting. This became, therefore, a period favorable to the theories of absolute power ; not so much shown by means of their positive assertion through the press, as by the silence of the press, comparatively speaking, on all political theories whatever

Abandonment of political-theoretical theories.

<sup>1</sup> Meunier, *Hist. de la Mère et du Fil.*



42. The political writings of this part of the seventeenth century assumed, in consequence, more of an historical, or, as we might say, a statistical character. Learning was employed in systematical analyses of ancient or modern forms of government, in dissertations explanatory of institutions, in copious and exact statements of the true, rather than arguments upon the right or the expedient. Some of the very numerous works of Herman Conringius, a professor at Helmstadt, seem to fall within this description. But none are better known than a collection, made by the Elzevirs, at different times near the middle of this century, containing accounts, chiefly published before, of the political constitutions of European commonwealths. This collection, which is in volumes of the smallest size, may be called for distinction the Elzevir Republics. It is very useful in respect of the knowledge of facts it imparts, but rarely contains any thing of a philosophical nature. Statistical descriptions of countries are much allied to these last: some, indeed, are included in the Elzevir series. They were as yet not frequent; but I might have mentioned, while upon the sixteenth century, one of the earliest, — the Description of the Low Countries by Ludovico Guicciardini, brother of the historian.

43. Those, however, were not entirely wanting who took a more philosophical view of the social relations of mankind. Among these, a very respectable place should be assigned to a Scotsman, by name Bellenden, whose treatise *De Statu*, in three books, is dedicated to Prince Charles in 1615. The first of these books is entitled *De Statu Prisci Orbis in Religione, Re Politica et Literis*; the second, *Ciceronis Princeps, sive de Statu Principis et Imperii*; the third, *Ciceronis Consul, Senator, Senatusque Romanus, sive de Statu Reipublicæ et Urbis Imperantis Orbi*. The first two books are, in a general sense, political; the last relates entirely to the Roman polity, but builds much political precept on this. Bellenden seems to have taken a more comprehensive view of history in his first book, and to have reflected more philosophically on it, than perhaps any one had done before; at least, I do not remember any work of so early an age which reminds me so much of Vico and the *Grandeur et Décadence* of Montesquieu. We can hardly make an exception for Bodin, because the Scot is so much more regularly histori-

Political  
literature  
historical.

Bellenden,  
*De Statu*.



ral, and so much more concise. The first book contains little more than forty pages. Bellenden's learning is considerable, and without that pedantry of quotation which makes most books of the age intolerable. The latter parts have less originality and reach of thought. This book was reprinted, as is well known, in 1787; but the celebrated preface of the editor has had the effect of eclipsing the original author. Parr was constantly read and talked of; Bellenden, never.

44. The Politics of Campanella are warped by a desire to please the court of Rome, which he recommends as Campanella's Politics. fit to enjoy an universal monarchy, at least by supreme control; and observes, with some acuteness, that no prince had been able to obtain an universal ascendant over Christendom, because the presiding vigilance of the holy see has regulated their mutual contentions, exalting one and depressing another, as seemed expedient for the good of religion.<sup>1</sup> This book is pregnant with deep reflection on history: it is enriched, perhaps, by the study of Bodin, but is much more concise. In one of the Dialogues of La Mothe le Vayer, we find the fallacy of some general maxims in politics drawn from a partial induction well exposed, by La Mothe le Vayer. showing the instances where they have wholly failed. Though he pays high compliments to Louis XIII. and to Richelieu, he speaks freely enough, in his sceptical way, of the general advantages of monarchy.

45. Gabriel Naudé, a man of extensive learning, acute understanding, and many good qualities, but rather lax in religious and moral principle, excited some Naudé's Coups d'Etat. attention by a very small volume, entitled *Considérations sur les Coups d'Etat*, which he wrote while young, at Rome, in the service of the Cardinal de Bagne. In this, he maintains the bold contempt of justice and humanity in political emergencies which had brought disgrace on the "Prince" of Machiavel; blaming those who, in his own country, had abandoned the defence of the St. Bartholomew Massacre. The book is in general heavy, and not well written; but, coming from a man of cool head, clear judgment, and considerable historical knowledge, it contains some remarks not unworthy of notice.

<sup>1</sup> "Nullus hactenus Christianus princeps anarchiam super cunctos Christianos populos sibi conservare potuit. Quoniam

papa preest illis, et dissipat erigitque illorum conatus prout religioni expedit."—c. 8

46. The ancient philosophers, the civil lawyers, and by far the majority of later writers, had derived the origin of government from some agreement of the community. Bodin, explicitly rejecting this hypothesis, referred it to violent usurpation. But in England, about the beginning of the reign of James, a different theory gained ground with the church: it was assumed, for it did not admit of proof, that a patriarchal authority had been transferred by primogeniture to the heir-general of the human race; so that kingdoms were but enlarged families; and an indefeasible right of monarchy was attached to their natural chief, which, in consequence of the impossibility of discovering him, devolved upon the representative of the first sovereign who could be historically proved to have reigned over any nation. This had not, perhaps, hitherto been maintained at length in any published book, but will be found to have been taken for granted in more than one. It was, of course, in favor with James I., who had a very strong hereditary title; and it might seem to be countenanced by the fact of Highland and Irish clanship, which does really affect to rest on a patriarchal basis.

47. This theory as to the origin of political society, or one refuted by akin to it, appears to have been espoused by some  *Suarez* on the Continent. Suarez, in the second book of his great work on law, observes, in a remarkable passage, that certain canonists hold civil magistracy to have been conferred by God on some prince, and to remain always in his heirs by succession; but "that such an opinion has neither authority nor foundation. For this power, by its very nature, belongs to no one man, but to a multitude of men. This is a certain conclusion, being common to all our authorities, as we find by St. Thomas, by the civil laws, and by the great canonists and casuists; all of whom agree that the prince has that power of law-giving which the people have given him. And the reason is evident, since all men are born equal, and consequently no one has a political jurisdiction over another, nor any dominion; nor can we give any reason from the nature of the thing why one man should govern another rather than the contrary. It is true that one might allege the primacy which Adam at his creation necessarily possessed, and hence deduce his government over all men, and suppose that to be derived by some one, either through, primogenitary descent,

or through the special appointment of Adam himself. Thus Chrysostom has said, that the descent of all men from Adam signifies their subordination to one sovereign. But in fact we could only infer from the creation and natural origin of mankind that Adam possessed a domestic or patriarchal (*æconomicum*), not a political, authority; for he had power over his wife, and afterwards a paternal power over his sons till they were emancipated; and he might even, in course of time, have servants and a complete family, and that power in respect of them which is called patriarchal. But after families began to be multiplied, and single men who were heads of families to be separated, they had each the same power with respect to their own families. Nor did political power begin to exist till many families began to be collected into one entire community. Hence, as that community did not begin by Adam's creation, nor by any will of his, but by that of all who formed it, we cannot properly say that Adam had naturally a political headship in such a society; for there are no principles of reason from which this could be inferred, since, by the law of nature, it is no right of the progenitor to be even king of his own posterity. And, if this cannot be proved by the principles of natural law, we have no ground for asserting that God has given such a power by a special gift or providence, inasmuch as we have no revelation or Scripture testimony to the purpose."<sup>1</sup> So clear, brief, and dispassionate a refutation might have caused our English divines, who became very fond of this patriarchal theory, to blush before the Jesuit of Granada.

48.. Suarez maintains it to be of the essence of a law, that it be enacted for the public good. An unjust law is no law, and does not bind the conscience.<sup>2</sup> In <sup>His opinion</sup> this he breathes the spirit of Mariana; but he <sup>of law.</sup> shuns some of his bolder assertions. He denies the right of rising in arms against a tyrant, unless he is an usurper; and though he is strongly for preserving the concession made by the kings of Spain to their people, that no taxes shall be levied without the consent of the Cortes, does not agree with those who lay it down as a general rule, that no prince can impose taxes on his people by his own will.<sup>3</sup> Suarez asserts the direct power of the church over heretical princes, but

<sup>1</sup> Lib. II. c. 2, § 2.<sup>2</sup> Lib. I. c. 7; and lib. III. c. 22.<sup>3</sup> Lib. v. c. 17.

denies it as to infidels.<sup>1</sup> In this last point, as has been seen, he follows the most respectable authorities of his nation.

49. Bayle has taken notice of a systematic treatise on Politics by John Althusius, a native of Germany. Of this, I have only seen an edition published at Groningen in 1615, and dedicated to the States of West Friesland. It seems, however, from the article in Bayle, that there was one printed at Herborn in 1603. Several German writers inveigh against this work as full of seditious principles, inimical to every government. It is a political system, taken chiefly from preceding authors, and very freely from Bodin; with great learning, but not very profitable to read. The *ephoræ*, as he calls them, by which he means the estates of a kingdom, have the right to resist a tyrant. But this right he denies to the private citizen. His chapter on this subject is written more in the tone of the sixteenth than of the seventeenth century, which indeed had scarcely commenced.<sup>2</sup> He answers in it Albericus Gentilis, Barclay, and others who had contended for passive obedience; not failing to draw support from the canonists and civilians whom he quotes. But the strongest passage is in his dedication to the States of Friesland. Here he declares his principle, that the supreme power or sovereignty (*jus majestatis*) does not reside in the chief magistrate, but in the people themselves, and that no other is proprietor or usufructuary of it; the magistrate being the administrator of this supreme power, but not its owner, nor entitled to use it for his benefit. And these rights of sovereignty are so much confined to the whole community, that they can no more alienate them to another, whether they will or not, than a man can transfer his own life.<sup>3</sup>

50. Few, even among the Calvinists, whose form of government was in some cases republican, would, in the seventeenth century, have approved this strong language of Althusius. But one of their noted theologians, Pareus, incurred the censure of the University of Oxford, in 1623, for some passages in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, which seemed to impugn their orthodox tenet of un-

<sup>1</sup> Lib. III. c. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. 38. "De tyrannide et ejus remediis."

<sup>3</sup> "Administratorem, procuratorem, gubernatorem juri majestatis, principem

agnosco. Proprietarium vero et usufructuarium majestatis nullum alium quam populum universum in corpus unum symbioticum ex pluribus minoribus associationibus consociatum," &c.

limited submission. He merely holds, that subjects, when not private men, but inferior magistrates, may defend themselves, and the state, and the true religion, even by arms against the sovereign, under certain conditions; because these superior magistrates are themselves responsible to the laws of God and of the state.<sup>1</sup> It was, in truth, impossible to deny the right of resistance in such cases without "branding the unsmirched brow" of Protestantism itself; for by what other means had the reformed religion been made to flourish in Holland and Geneva, or in Scotland? But in England, where it had been planted under a more auspicious star, there was little occasion to seek this vindication of the Protestant Church, which had not, in the legal phrase, come in by disseizin of the state, but had united with the state to turn out of doors its predecessor. That some of the Anglican refugees under Mary were ripe enough for resistance, or even regicide, has been seen in another place by an extract from one of their most distinguished prelates.

51. Bacon ought to appear as a prominent name in political philosophy, if we had never met with it in any other.

But we have anticipated much of his praise on this score; and it is sufficient to repeat generally, that, on such subjects, he is the most sagacious of mankind. It would be almost ridiculous to descend from Bacon, even when his giant shadow does but pass over our scene, to the feebler class of political moralists, such as Saavedra, author of *Idea di un Principe Politico*, a wretched effort of Spain in her degeneracy; but an Italian writer must not be neglected, from the remarkable circumstance, that he is esteemed one of the first who have treated the science of political economy.

It must, however, be understood, that, besides what may be found on the subject in the ancients, many valuable observations which must be referred to political economy occur in Bodin; that the Italians had, in the sixteenth century, a few tracts on coinage; that Botero touches some points of the science; and that in England there were, during the

<sup>1</sup> "Subditi non privati, sed in magistratu inferiori constituti, adversus superiorem magistratum se et rempublicam et ecclesiam seu veram religionem etiam armis defendere jure possunt, his positis conditionibus: 1. Cum superior magistratus degeneret in tyrannum; 2. Aut ad manifestum idolatriam aliquam blas-

phemias ipsos vel subditos alios vult cogere; 3. Cum ipsi atrox inferatur injuria; 4. Si aliter incolemes fortunæ vitæ et civitatis esse non possint; 5. Ne pretestu religionis aut justitiæ suæ quantant; 6. Servata semper ecclesiæ et moderamine inculpate tutele juxta legem." *Parvus in Epist. ad Roman.,* col. 1260.



same age, pamphlets on public wealth, especially one entitled *A Brief Conceit of English Policy*.<sup>1</sup>

52. The author to whom we allude is Antonio Serra, a native of Cosenza, whose short treatise on the causes which may render gold and silver abundant in countries that have no mines is dedicated to the Count de Lemos, "from the prison of Vicaria, this tenth day of July, 1613." It has hence been inferred, but without a shadow of proof, that Serra had been engaged in the conspiracy of his fellow-citizen Campanella, fourteen years before. The dedication is in a tone of great flattery, but has no allusion to the cause of his imprisonment, which might have been any other. He proposes, in his preface, not to discuss political government in general, of which he thinks that the ancients have treated sufficiently, if we well understood their works; and still less to speak of justice and injustice, the civil law being enough for this; but merely what are the causes that render a country destitute of mines abundant in gold and silver, which no one has ever considered, though some have taken narrow views, and fancied that a low rate of exchange is the sole means of enriching a country.

53. In the first part of this treatise, Serra divides the causes of wealth, that is, of abundance of money, into general and particular accidents (*accidenti communis proprii*): meaning, by the former, circumstances which may exist in any country; by the latter, such as are peculiar to some. The common accidents are four, — abundance of manufactures, character of the inhabitants, extent of commerce, and wisdom of government. The peculiar are, chiefly, the fertility of the soil, and convenience of geographical position. Serra prefers manufactures to agriculture: one of his reasons is their indefinite capacity of multiplication; for no man, whose land is fully cultivated by sowing a hundred bushels of wheat, can sow with profit a hundred and fifty; but, in manufactures, he may not only double the produce, but do this a hundred times over, and that with less proportion of expense. Though this is now evident, it is perhaps what had not been much remarked before.

<sup>1</sup> This bears the initials of W. B., which some have fictitiously taken for William Shakespeare. I have some reason to believe that there was an edit. considerably earlier than that of 1684, but, from cir-

cumstances unnecessary to mention, cannot produce the manuscript authority on which this opinion is founded. It has been reprinted more than once, if I mistake not, in modern times.

Serra on  
the means  
of obtain-  
ing money  
without  
mines.

His causes  
of wealth.

54. Venice, according to Serra, held the first place as a commercial city, not only in Italy, but in Europe: <sup>the praise of Venice</sup> "for experience demonstrates that all the merchandises which come from Asia to Europe pass through Venice, and thence are distributed to other parts." But, as this must evidently exclude all the traffic by the Cape of Good Hope, we can only understand Serra to mean the trade with the Levant. It is, however, worthy of observation, that we are apt to fall into a vulgar error in supposing that Venice was crushed, or even materially affected, as a commercial city, by the discoveries of the Portuguese.<sup>1</sup> She was, in fact, more opulent, as her buildings of themselves may prove, in the sixteenth century, than in any preceding age. The French trade from Marseilles to the Levant, which began later to flourish, was what impoverished Venice, rather than that of Portugal with the East Indies. This republic was the perpetual theme of admiration with the Italians. Serra compares Naples with Venice: one, he says, exports grain to a vast amount, the other imports its whole subsistence: money is valued higher at Naples, so that there is a profit in bringing it in, — its export is forbidden; at Venice it is free: at Naples the public revenues are expended in the kingdom; at Venice they are principally hoarded. Yet Naples is poor, and Venice rich. Such is the effect of her commerce and of the wisdom of her government, which is always uniform; while in kingdoms, and far more in vicerealties, the system changes with the persons. In Venice the method of choosing magistrates is in such perfection, that no one can come in by corruption or favor, nor can any one rise to high offices who has not been tried in the lower.

55. All causes of wealth, except those he has enumerated, Serra holds to be subaltern or temporary: thus the low rate of exchange is subject to the common accidents of commerce.

<sup>1</sup> (Perhaps it is too much to say, that Venice was not materially affected by the Portuguese commerce with India: when, though she became positively richer in the sixteenth century than before, her progress would have been more rapid had the monopoly of the spice-trade remained in her hands. A remarkable proof of the apprehensions which the discovery of the passage by the Cape excited at Venice, appears by a letter of Luigi da Porto, author of the novel on Romeo and Juliet, written so early as 1509, just ten

years after the voyage of Vasco di Gama. One of the senators recommended his colleagues to employ their money in inducing the Sultan of Egypt to obstruct the voyages of the Portuguese to Calicut, so that the state might possess again the whole commerce in spices: "Nella stato sin qua gran parte della ricchezza nostra, e l' non poter più farlo, fra breve dovrà esser cagione della nostra povertà e della nostra rovina." — Lettere di L. da Porto, 1832, vol. II. p. 470. — 1847.]

It seems, however, to have been a theory of superficial reasoners on public wealth, that it depended on exchanges far more than is really the case; and, in the second part of this treatise, Serra opposes a particular writer, named De Santis, who had accounted in this way alone for abundance of money in a state. Serra thinks, that to reduce the weight of coin may sometimes be an allowable expedient, and better than to raise its denomination. The difference seems not very important. The coin of Naples was exhausted by the revenues of absentee proprietors, which some had proposed to withhold,—a measure to which Serra justly objects. This book has been reprinted at Milan in the collection of Italian economists, and, as it anticipates the principles of what has been called the mercantile theory, deserves some attention in following the progress of opinion. The once celebrated treatise of Mun—England's Treasure by Foreign Trade—was written before 1640; but, not being published till after the Restoration, we may postpone it to the next period.

56. Last in time among political philosophers before the middle of the century, we find the greatest and most famous, Thomas Hobbes. His treatise *De Cive* was printed in 1642 for his private friends. It obtained, however, a considerable circulation, and excited some animadversion. In 1647, he published it at Amsterdam, with notes to vindicate and explain what had been censured. In 1650, an English treatise, with the Latin title, *De Corpore Politico*, appeared; and, in 1651, the complete system of his philosophy was given to the world in the *Leviathan*. These three works bear somewhat the same relation to one another that the *Advancement of Learning* does to the treatise *De Augmentis Scientiarum*: they are in effect the same; the same order of subjects, the same arguments, and, in most places, either the same words, or such variations as occurred to the second thoughts of the writer; but much is more copiously illustrated and more clearly put in the latter than in the former; while much also, from whatever cause, is withdrawn, or considerably modified. Whether the *Leviathan* is to be reckoned so exclusively his last thoughts that we should presume him to have retracted the passages that do not appear in it, is what every one must determine for himself. I shall endeavor to present a comparative analysis of the three treatises, with some preference to the last.

Low rate of  
exchanges  
not essential  
to  
wealth.

Hobbes:  
his political  
works.

57. Those, he begins by observing, who have hitherto written upon civil policy, have assumed that man is an animal framed for society; as if nothing else were required for the institution of commonwealths than that men should agree upon some terms of compact which they call laws. But this is entirely false. That men do naturally seek each other's society, he admits, by a note in the published edition of *De Cive*; but political societies are not mere meetings of men, but unions founded on the faith of covenants. Nor does the desire of men for society imply that they are fit for it: many may desire it who will not readily submit to its necessary conditions.<sup>1</sup> This he left out in the two other treatises; thinking it, perhaps, too great a concession to admit any desire of society in man.

*Analysis of  
his three  
treatises.*

58. Nature has made little odds among men of mature age as to strength or knowledge. No reason, therefore, can be given why one should, by any intrinsic superiority, command others, or possess more than they. But there is a great difference in their passions: some through vainglory seeking pre-eminence over their fellows; some willing to allow equality, but not to lose what they know to be good for themselves. And this contest can only be decided by battle showing which is the stronger.

59. All men desire to obtain good and to avoid evil, especially death. Hence they have a natural right to preserve their own lives and limbs, and to use all means necessary for this end. Every man is judge for himself of the necessity of the means, and the greatness of the danger. And hence he has a right by nature to all things, to do what he wills to others, to possess and enjoy all he can; for he is the only judge whether they tend or not to his preservation. But every other man has the same right. Hence there can be no injury towards another in a state of nature. Not that in such a state a man may not sin against God, or transgress the law of nature;<sup>2</sup> but injury, which is doing any thing without right, implies human laws that limit right.

<sup>1</sup> "Societates autem civiles non sunt meri congressus, sed fœdera, quibus fidelitatis fides et pacta necessaria sunt. . . . Alia res est appetere alia esse capacem. Appetunt enim illi qui tamen conditiones æquas, sine quibus societas esse non potest, accipere per superbiam non dignantur."

<sup>2</sup> "Non quod in tali statu peccare in

Deum, aut leges naturales violare impossibile sit. Nam injustitia erga homines supponit leges humanas, quales in statu naturali nullæ sunt."—*De Cive*, c. 1. This he left out in the later treatises. He says afterward (sect. 28), "Omne damnum homini illatum legibus naturalibus violatis atque in Deum injuria est."

60. Thus the state of man in natural liberty is a state of war,—a war of every man against every man, wherein the notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have no place. Irresistible might gives of itself right, which is nothing but the physical liberty of using our power as we will for our own preservation and what we deem conducive to it. But as, through the equality of natural powers, no man possesses this irresistible superiority, this state of universal war is contrary to his own good, which he necessarily must desire. Hence his reason dictates that he should seek peace as far as he can, and strengthen himself by all the helps of war against those with whom he cannot have peace. This, then, is the first fundamental law of nature; for a law of nature is nothing else than a rule or precept found out by reason for the avoiding what may be destructive to our life.

61. From this primary rule another follows,—that a man should be willing, when others are so too, as far forth as for peace and defence of himself he shall think it necessary, to lay down his right to all things, and to be contented with so much liberty against other men as he would allow to other men against himself. This may be done by renouncing his right to any thing, which leaves it open to all, or by transferring it specially to another. Some rights, indeed, as those to his life and limbs, are inalienable; and no man lays down the right of resisting those who attack them. But, in general, he is bound not to hinder those to whom he has granted or abandoned his own right from availing themselves of it: and such hinderance is injustice or injury; that is, it is *sine jure*, his *jus* being already gone. Such injury may be compared to absurdity in argument, being in contradiction to what he has already done, as an absurd proposition is in contradiction to what the speaker has already allowed.

62. The next law of nature, according to Hobbes, is that men should fulfil their covenants. What contracts and covenants are, he explains in the usual manner. None can covenant with God, unless by special revelation: therefore vows are not binding, nor do oaths add any thing to the swearer's obligation. But covenants entered into by fear, he holds to be binding in a state of nature, though they may be annulled by the law. That the observance of justice, that is, of our covenants, is never against reason, Hobbes labors to prove; for, if ever its violation may have turned out suc-



cessful, this, being contrary to probable expectation, ought not to influence us. "That which gives to human actions the relish of justice is a certain nobleness or gallantness of courage rarely found; by which a man scorns to be beholden for the contentment of his life to fraud, or breach of promise."<sup>1</sup> A short gleam of something above the creeping selfishness of his ordinary morality!

63. He then enumerates many other laws of nature, such as gratitude, complaisance, equity, all subordinate to the main one of preserving peace by the limitation of the natural right, as he supposes, to usurp all. These laws are immutable and eternal: the science of them is the only true science of moral philosophy; for that is nothing but the science of what is good and evil in the conversation and society of mankind. In a state of nature, private appetite is the measure of good and evil. But all men agree that peace is good; and therefore the means of peace, which are the moral virtues or laws of nature, are good also, and their contraries evil. These laws of nature are not properly called such, but conclusions of reason as to what should be done or abstained from; they are but theorems concerning what conduces to conservation and defence; whereas law is strictly the word of him that by right has command over others. But, so far as these are enacted by God in Scripture, they are truly laws.

64. These laws of nature, being contrary to our natural passions, are but words of no strength to secure any one without a controlling power. For, till such a power is erected, every man will rely on his own force and skill. Nor will the conjunction of a few men or families be sufficient for security; nor that of a great multitude, guided by their own particular judgments and appetites. For if we could suppose a great multitude of men to consent in the observation of justice and other laws of nature, without a common power to keep them all in awe, we might as well suppose all mankind to do the same; and then there neither would be, nor need to be, any civil government or commonwealth at all, because there would be peace without subjection.<sup>2</sup> Hence it becomes necessary to confer all their power on one man, or assembly of men, to bear their person or represent them; so that every one shall own himself author of what shall be done by such representative. It is a covenant of each with each, that he will be

<sup>1</sup> *Leviathan*, c. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, c. 17.

governed in such a manner, if the other will agree to the same. This is the generation of the great Leviathan, or mortal God, to whom, under the immortal God, we owe our peace and defence. In him consists the essence of the commonwealth, which is one person; of whose acts a great multitude, by mutual covenant, have made themselves the authors.

65. This person (including, of course, an assembly as well as an individual) is the sovereign, and possesses sovereign power; and such power may spring from agreement or from force. A commonwealth, by agreement or institution, is when a multitude do agree and covenant, one with another, that whatever the major part shall agree to represent them shall be the representative of them all. After this has been done, the subjects cannot change their government without its consent; being bound by mutual covenant to own its actions. If any one man should dissent, the rest would break their covenant with him. But there is no covenant with the sovereign. He cannot have covenanted with the whole multitude as one party, because it has no collective existence till the commonwealth is formed; nor with each man separately, because the acts of the sovereign are no longer his sole acts, but those of the society, including him who would complain of the breach. Nor can the sovereign act unjustly towards a subject; for he who acts by another's authority cannot be guilty of injustice towards him: he may, it is true, commit iniquity, that is, violate the laws of God and nature, but not injury.

66. The sovereign is necessarily judge of all proper means of defence, of what doctrines shall be taught, of all disputes and complaints, of rewards and punishments, of war and peace with neighboring commonwealths, and even of what shall be held by each subject in property. Property, he admits in one place, existed in families before the institution of civil society; but between different families there was no *meum* and *tuum*. These are by the law and command of the sovereign; and hence, though every subject may have a right of property against his fellow, he can have none against the sovereign. These rights are incommunicable, and inseparable from the sovereign power: there are others of minor importance, which he may alienate; but, if any one of the former is taken away from him, he ceases to be truly sovereign.

67. The sovereign power cannot be limited nor divided

Hence there can be but three simple forms of commonwealth, — monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. The first he greatly prefers. The king has no private interest apart from the people, whose wealth, honor, security from enemies, internal tranquillity, are evidently for his own good. But, in the other forms, each man may have a private advantage to seek. In popular assemblies, there is always an aristocracy of orators, interrupted sometimes by the temporary monarchy of one orator. And though a king may deprive a man of all he possesses to enrich a flatterer or favorite, so may also a democratic assembly, where there may be as many Neroes as orators, each with the whole power of the people he governs. And these orators are usually more powerful to hurt others than to save them. A king may receive counsel of whom he will; an assembly, from those only who have a right to belong to it; nor can their counsel be secret. They are also more inconstant both from passion and from their numbers; the absence of a few often undoing all that had been done before. A king cannot disagree with himself; but an assembly may do so, even to producing civil war.

68. An elective or limited king is not the sovereign, but the sovereign's minister; nor can there be a perfect form of government where the present ruler has not power to dispose of the succession. His power, therefore, is wholly without bounds; and correlative must be the people's obligation to obey. Unquestionably there are risks of mischiefs and inconveniences attending a monarchy: but these are less than in the other forms; and the worst of them is not comparable to those of civil war, or the anarchy of a state of nature, to which the dissolution of the commonwealth would reduce us.

69. In the exercise of government, the sovereign is to be guided by one maxim, which contains all his duty: *Salus populi suprema lex*. And in this is to be reckoned not only the conservation of life, but all that renders it happy. For this is the end for which men entered into civil society, that they might enjoy as much happiness as human nature can attain. It would be therefore a violation of the law of nature, and of the trust reposed in them, if sovereigns did not study, as far as by their power it may be, that their subjects should be furnished with every thing necessary, not for life alone, but for the delights of life. And even those who have

acquired empire by conquest must desire to have men fit to serve them, and should, in consistency with their own aims, endeavor to provide what will increase their strength and courage. Taxes, in the opinion of Hobbes, should be laid equally, and rather on expenditure than on revenue: the prince should promote agriculture, fisheries, and commerce, and, in general, whatever makes men happy and prosperous. Many just reflections on the art of government are uttered by Hobbes, especially as to the inexpediency of interfering too much with personal liberty. No man, he observes in another place, is so far free as to be exempted from the sovereign power; but, if liberty consists in the paucity of restraining laws, he sees not why this may not be had in monarchy as well as in a popular government. The dream of so many political writers, a wise and just despotism, is pictured by Hobbes as the perfection of political society.

70. But most of all is the sovereign to be free from any limitation by the power of the priesthood. This is chiefly to be dreaded, that he should command any thing under the penalty of death, and the clergy forbid it under the penalty of damnation. The pretensions of the see of Rome, of some bishops at home, and those of even the lowest citizens, to judge for themselves and determine upon public religion, are dangerous to the state, and the frequent cause of wars. The sovereign, therefore, is alone to judge whether religions are safely to be admitted or not. And it may be urged, that princes are bound to cause such doctrine as they think conducive to their subjects' salvation to be taught, forbidding every other, and that they cannot do otherwise in conscience. This, however, he does not absolutely determine. But he is clearly of opinion, that, though it is not the case where the prince is infidel,<sup>1</sup> the head of the state, in a Christian commonwealth, is head also of the church; that he, rather than any ecclesiastics, is the judge of doctrines; that a church is the same as a commonwealth under the same sovereign, the component members of each being precisely the same. This is not very far removed from the doctrine of Hooker, and still less from the practice of Henry VIII.

<sup>1</sup> "Imperantibus autem non Christianis in temporalibus quidem omnibus eandem debere obedientiam etiam a civibus Christianis extra controversiam est: in spiritualibus vero, hoc est, in illis quæ pertinent ad modum colendi Dei sequenda est ecclesia aliqua Christianorum." — De Civitate, c. 12, § 3.

bus vero, hoc est, in illis quæ pertinent ad modum colendi Dei sequenda est ecclesia aliqua Christianorum." — De Civitate, c. 12, § 3.

71. The second class of commonwealths, those by forcible acquisition, differ more in origin than in their subsequent character from such as he has been discussing. The rights of sovereignty are the same in both. Dominion is acquired by generation or by conquest; the one parental, the other despotical. Parental power, however, he derives not so much from having given birth to, as from having preserved, the child; and, with originality and acuteness, thinks it belongs by nature to the mother rather than to the father, except where there is some contract between the parties to the contrary. The act of maintenance and nourishment conveys, as he supposes, an unlimited power over the child, extending to life and death; and there can be no state of nature between parent and child. In his notion of patriarchal authority, he seems to go as far as Filmer; but, more acute than Filmer, perceives that it affords no firm basis for political society. By conquest, and sparing the lives of the vanquished, they become slaves; and, so long as they are held in bodily confinement, there is no covenant between them and their master; but, in obtaining corporal liberty, they expressly or tacitly covenant to obey him as their lord and sovereign.

72. The political philosophy of Hobbes had much to fix the attention of the world, and to create a sect of admiring partisans. The circumstances of the time, and the character of the passing generation, no doubt, powerfully conspired with its intrinsic qualities; but a system so original, so intrepid, so disdainful of any appeal but to the common reason and common interests of mankind, so unaffectedly and perspicuously proposed, could at no time have failed of success. From the two rival theories,—on the one hand, that of original compact between the prince and people, derived from antiquity, and sanctioned by the authority of fathers and schoolmen; on the other, that of an absolute patriarchal transmuted into an absolute regal power, which had become prevalent among part of the English clergy,—Hobbes took as much as might conciliate a hearing from both, an original covenant of the multitude and an unlimited authority of the sovereign. But he had a substantial advantage over both these parties, and especially the latter, in establishing the happiness of the community as the sole final cause of government, both in its institution and its continuance; the great fundamental theo-



rem upon which all political science depends, but sometimes obscured or lost in the pedantry of theoretical writers.<sup>1</sup>

73. In the positive system of Hobbes we find less cause for praise. We fall in, at the very outset, with a strange and indefensible paradox,—the natural equality of human capacities,—which he seems to have adopted rather in opposition to Aristotle's notion of a natural right in some men to govern, founded on their superior qualities, than because it was at all requisite for his own theory. By extending this alleged equality, or slightness of difference, among men, to physical strength, he has more evidently shown its incompatibility with experience. If superiority in mere strength has not often been the source of political power, it is for two reasons: first, because, though there is a vast interval between the strongest man and the weakest, there is generally not much between the former and him who comes next in vigor; and, secondly, because physical strength is multiplied by the aggregation of individuals, so that the stronger few may be overpowered by the weaker many; while in mental capacity, comprehending acquired skill and habit as well as natural genius and disposition, both the degrees of excellence are removed by a wider distance; and, what is still more important, the aggregation of the powers of individuals does not regularly and certainly augment the value of the whole. That the real or acknowledged superiority of one man to his fellows has been

<sup>1</sup> [It was imputed to Hobbes by some of the royalists, that he had endeavored to conciliate Cromwell, and make his own residence in England secure, by the unlimited doctrine of submission to power that he lays down. This is said by Clarendon; but I had been accustomed to look on it as an unfounded conjecture. In the curious poem, however, which Hobbes wrote at the age of eighty-four, on his own life, we have some confirmation of it:—

"Militat ille liber nunc regibus omnibus,  
et qui  
Nominis sub quovis regia jura tenent."

He owns that he was accused, to the King, of favoring Cromwell.

"Nam regi accusor falso, quasi facta probem  
Impia Cromwelli, jus acclerique dærem."

Creditur; adversis in partibus esse videtur;  
Perpetuo fubeor regis abesse domo.

In patriam rideo intus non bene certus,  
Sed nullo potui tutior esse loco.

Loquimur veniens, ne clam venisse vide-  
rer,  
Concilio statim (sic) consilium  
eram.

Omnia miles erat, committit omnia et uni  
Porcebat; tacite Cromwelli est unus  
erat

Regis conanti calamo defendere jura,  
Quis vitio vertat regia jura potens?"

The last two lines were an admission of the charge. This poem is worth reading, and is, of course, an extraordinary performance at eighty-four. Hobbes (8th W. Molesworth's edition, vol. i. p. 311 1553.)

the ordinary source of power, is sufficiently evident from what we daily see among children, and must, it should seem, be admitted by all who derive civil authority from choice, or even from conquest; and therefore is to be inferred from the very system of Hobbes.

74. That a state of nature is a state of war; that men, or at least a very large proportion of men, employ force of every kind in seizing to themselves what is in the possession of others, — is a proposition for which Hobbes incurred as much obloquy as for any one in his writings; yet it is one not easy to controvert. But, soon after the publication of the *Leviathan*, a dislike of the Calvinistic scheme of universal depravity, as well as of his own, led many considerable men into the opposite extreme of elevating too much the dignity of human nature; if by that term they meant, and in no other sense could it be applicable to this question, the real practical character of the majority of the species. Certainly the sociableness of man is as much a part of his nature as his selfishness: but whether this propensity to society would necessarily or naturally have led to the institution of political communities, may not be very clear; while we have proof enough in historical traditions, and in what we observe of savage nations, that mutual defence by mutual concession — the common agreement not to attack the possessions of each other, or to permit strangers to do so — has been the true basis, the final aim, of those institutions, be they more or less complex, to which we give the appellation of commonwealths.

75. In developing, therefore, the origin of civil society, Hobbes, though not essentially differing from his predecessors, has placed the truth in a fuller light. It does not seem equally clear, that his own theory of a mutual covenant between the members of an unanimous multitude to become one people, and to be represented, in all time to come, by such a sovereign government as the majority should determine, affords a satisfactory groundwork for the rights of political society. It is, in the first place, too hypothetical as a fact. That such an agreement may have been sometimes made by independent families, in the first coming-together of communities, it would be presumptuous to deny: it carries upon the face of it no improbability, except as to the design of binding posterity, which seems too refined for such a state of mankind

as we must suppose; but it is surely possible to account for the general fact of civil government in a simpler way; and what is most simple, though not always true, is, on the first appearance, most probable. If we merely suppose an agreement, unanimous of course in those who concur in it, to be governed by one man, or by one council, promising that they shall wield the force of the whole against any one who shall contravene their commands issued for the public good, the foundation is as well laid, and the commonwealth as firmly established, as by the double process of a mutual covenant to constitute a people, and a popular determination to constitute a government. It is true that Hobbes distinguishes a commonwealth by institution, which he supposes to be founded on this unanimous consent, from one by acquisition, for which force alone is required. But as the force of one man goes but a little way towards compelling the obedience of others, so as to gain the name of sovereign power, unless it is aided by the force of many who voluntarily conspire to its ends, this sort of commonwealth by conquest will be found to involve the previous institution of the more peaceable kind.

76. This theory of a mutual covenant is defective also in a most essential point. It furnishes no adequate basis for any commonwealth beyond the lives of those who established it. The right, indeed, of men to bind their children, and through them a late posterity, is sometimes asserted by Hobbes, but in a very transient manner, and as if he was aware of the weakness of his ground. It might be inquired, whether the force on which alone he rests the obligation of children to obey can give any right beyond its own continuance; whether the absurdity he imputes to those who do not stand by their own engagements is imputable to such as disregard the covenants of their forefathers; whether, in short, any law of nature requires our obedience to a government we deem hurtful, because, in a distant age, a multitude whom we cannot trace bestowed unlimited power on some unknown persons from whom that government pretends to derive its succession.

77. A better ground for the subsisting rights of his *Leviathan* is sometimes suggested, though faintly, by Hobbes himself: "If one refuse to stand to what the major part shall ordain, or make protestation against any of their decrees, he does contrary to his covenant, and therefore unjustly; and whether he be of the congregation or not, whether his consent be asked

or not, he must either submit to their decrees, or be left in the condition of war he was in before, wherein he might without injustice be destroyed by any man whatsoever."<sup>1</sup> This renewal of the state of war, which is the state of nature; this denial of the possibility of doing an injury to any one who does not obey the laws of the commonwealth, — is enough to silence the question why we are obliged still to obey. The established government, and those who maintain it, being strong enough to wage war against gainsayers, give them the option of incurring the consequences of such warfare, or of complying with the laws. But it seems to be a corollary from this, that the stronger part of a commonwealth, which may not always be the majority, have not only a right to despise the wishes, but the interests, of dissentients. Thus, the more we scrutinize the theories of Hobbes, the more there appears a deficiency of that which only a higher tone of moral sentiment can give, — a security for ourselves against the appetites of others, and for them against our own. But it may be remarked, that his supposition of a state of war, not as a permanent state of nature, but as just self-defence, is perhaps the best footing on which we can place the right to inflict severe, and especially capital, punishment upon offenders against the law.

78. The positions so dogmatically laid down as to the impossibility of mixing different sorts of government, were, even in the days of Hobbes, contradicted by experience. Several republics had lasted for ages under a mixed aristocracy and democracy; and there had surely been sufficient evidence that a limited monarchy might exist, though, in the revolution of ages, it might, one way or other, pass into some new type of polity. And these prejudices in favor of absolute power are rendered more dangerous by paradoxes unusual for an Englishman, even in those days of high prerogative when Hobbes began to write, — that the subject has no property relatively to the sovereign; and, what is the fundamental error of his whole system, that nothing done by the prince can be injurious to any one else. This is accompanied by the other portents of Hobbism scattered through these treatises, especially the *Leviathan*, that the distinctions of right and wrong, moral good and evil, are made by the laws; that no man can do amiss who obeys the sovereign authority; that, though pri-

<sup>1</sup> *Lev.*, c. 18.

rate belief is of necessity beyond the prince's control, it is according to his will, and in no other way, that we must worship God.

79. The political system of Hobbes, like his moral system, of which, in fact, it is only a portion, sears up the heart. It takes away the sense of wrong, that has consoled the wise and good in their dangers, the proud appeal of innocence under oppression, like that of Prometheus to the elements, uttered to the witnessing world, to coming ages, to the just ear of Heaven. It confounds the principles of moral approbation, the notions of good and ill desert, in a servile idolatry of the monstrous Leviathan it creates; and, after sacrificing all right at the altar of power, denies to the Omnipotent the prerogative of dictating the laws of his own worship.

### SECTION III.

Roman Jurisprudence—Grotius on the Laws of War and Peace—Analysis of this Work—Defence of it against some Strictures.

80. In the Roman jurisprudence, we do not find such a cluster of eminent men during this period as in the sixteenth century; and it would, of course, be out of our province to search for names little now remembered, perhaps, even in forensic practice. Many of the writings of Fabre of Savoy, who has been mentioned in the present volume, belong to the first years of this century. Farinacci, or Farinaceus, a lawyer of Rome, obtained a celebrity, which, after a long duration, has given way in the progress of legal studies, less directed than formerly towards a superfluous erudition.<sup>1</sup> But the work of Menochius, *De Præsumptionibus*, or, as we should express it, on the rules of evidence, is said to have lost none of its usefulness, even since the decline of the civil law in France.<sup>2</sup> No book, perhaps, belonging to this period, is so generally known as the Commentaries of Vinnius on the Institutes, which, as far as I know, has not been superseded by any of later date. Conringius of Helmstadt may be reckoned, in some measure,

Civil jurists  
of this pe-  
riod.

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Univ.

<sup>2</sup> Id.



among the writers on jurisprudence, though chiefly in the line of historical illustration. The *Elementa Juris Civilis*, by Zouch, is a mere epitome, but neatly executed, of the principal heads of the Roman law, and nearly in its own words. Arthur Duck, another Englishman, has been praised, even by foreigners, for a succinct and learned, though elementary and popular, treatise on the use and authority of the civil law in different countries of Europe. This little book is not disagreeably written; but it is not, of course, from England that much could be contributed towards Roman jurisprudence.

81. The larger principles of jurisprudence, which link that science with general morals, and especially such as relate to the intercourse of nations, were not left untouched in the great work of Suarez on laws. I have not, however, made myself particularly acquainted with this portion of his large volume. Spain appears to have been the country in which these questions were originally discussed upon principles broader than precedent, as well as upon precedents themselves; and Suarez, from the general comprehensiveness of his views in legislation and ethics, is likely to have said well whatever he may have said on the subject of international law. But it does not appear that he is much quoted by later writers.

82. The name of Suarez is obscure in comparison of one who soon came forward in the great field of natural jurisprudence. This was Hugo Grotius, whose famous work, *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, was published at Paris in 1625. It may be reckoned a proof of the extraordinary diligence, as well as quickness of parts, which distinguished this writer, that it had occupied a very short part of his life. He first mentions, in a letter to the younger Thuanus in August, 1623, that he was employed in examining the principal questions which belong to the law of nations.<sup>1</sup> In the same year, he recommends the study of that law to another of his correspondents, in such terms as bespeak his own attention to it.<sup>2</sup> According to one of his letters to Gassendi, quoted by Stewart, the scheme was suggested to him by Peiresc.

<sup>1</sup> "Versor in examinanda controversia principalis quæ ad jus gentium pertinet." — Epist. 75. This is not from the folio edition of his epistles, so often quoted in a promising chapter of this work (part

iii., chap. ii.), but from one antecedently published in 1648, and entitled *Grotii Epistolæ ad Gallos*.

<sup>2</sup> "Hoc spatium exacto, nihil restat quod tibi neque commendaui atque studium

83. It is acknowledged by every one, that the publication of this treatise made an epoch in the philosophical, and almost, we might say, in the political, history of Europe. Those who sought a guide to their own conscience or that of others, those who dispensed justice, those who appealed to the public sense of right in the intercourse of nations, had recourse to its copious pages for what might direct or justify their actions. Within thirty or forty years from its publication, we find the work of Grotius generally received as authority by professors of the Continental universities, and deemed necessary for the student of civil law, at least in the Protestant countries of Europe. In England, from the difference of laws and from some other causes which might be assigned, the influence of Grotius was far slower, and even, ultimately, much less general. He was, however, treated with great respect as the founder of the modern law of nations, which is distinguished from what formerly bore that name by its more continual reference to that of nature. But, when a book is little read, it is easily misrepresented; and as a new school of philosophers rose up, averse to much of the principles of their predecessors, but, above all things, to their tediousness, it became the fashion not so much to dispute the tenets of Grotius, as to set aside his whole work, among the barbarous and obsolete schemes of ignorant ages. For this purpose, various charges have been alleged against it by men of deserved eminence, not, in my opinion, very candidly, or with much real knowledge of its contents. They have had, however, the natural effect of creating a prejudice, which, from the sort of oblivion fallen upon the book, is not likely to die away. I shall, therefore, not think myself performing an useless task in giving an analysis of the treatise *De Jure Belli et Pacis*; so that the reader, having seen for himself what it is, may not stand in need of any argu-

*Juris, non illius privati, ex quo leguleii et rabule viciant, sed gentium ac publici; quam præstabili scientiam Cicero vocans consistere ait in fœderibus, partitionibus, conditionibus populorum, regum, nationum, in omni denique jure belli et pacis. Hujus juris principia quomodo ex aurali philosophia petenda sunt, monstrare poterunt Platonis ac Ciceronis de legibus liber. Sed Platonis summas aliquas scholæ suffecerit. Neque penitent ex scholasticæ Thomam Aquinatem, si non perlegere, saltem inspicere secunda*

*parte secundæ partis libri, quem Summan Theologie inseripsit: præsertim ubi de justitia agit ac de legibus. Usus propius monstrabant Pandectæ, libro primo atque ultimo; et codex Justinianus, libro primo et tribus postremis. Nostri temporis juris consulti pauci juris gentium ac publici controversias attigere, æque magis eminent, qui id fecere, Vaequius, Hottonianus, Gentilius."—Epist. xvi This passage is useful in showing the views Grotius himself entertained as to the subject and groundwork of his treatise.*

ments or testimony to refute those who have represented it as it is not.

84. The book may be considered as nearly original, in its general platform, as any work of man, in an advanced stage of civilization and learning, can be. <sup>Its originality.</sup> It is more so, perhaps, than those of Montesquieu and Smith. No one had before gone to the foundations of international law so as to raise a complete and consistent superstructure; few had handled even separate parts, or laid down any satisfactory rules concerning it. Grotius enumerates a few preceding writers, especially Ayala and Albericus Gentilis; but does not mention Soto in this place. Gentilis, he says, is wont, in determining controverted questions, to follow either a few precedents not always of the best description, or even the authority of modern lawyers, in their answers to cases, many of which are written with more regard to what the consulting parties desire, than to what real justice and equity demand.

85. The motive assigned for this undertaking is the noblest. "I saw," he says, "in the whole Christian world, a <sup>Its motive and object.</sup> license of fighting, at which even barbarians might blush; wars begun on trifling pretexts, or none at all, and carried on without reverence for any divine or human law, as if that one declaration of war let loose every crime." The sight of such a monstrous state of things had induced some, like Erasmus, to deny the lawfulness of any war to a Christian. But this extreme, as he justly observes, is rather pernicious than otherwise; for, when a tenet so paradoxical and impracticable is maintained, it begets a prejudice against the more temperate course which he prepares to indicate. "Let, therefore," he says afterwards, "the laws be silent in the midst of arms; but those laws only which belong to peace, the laws of civil life and public tribunals, not such as are eternal, and fitted for all seasons, unwritten laws of nature, which subsist in what the ancient form of the Romans denominated 'a pure and holy war.'"<sup>1</sup>

86. "I have employed, in confirmation of this natural and national law, the testimonies of philosophers, of his- <sup>His authorities</sup> torians, of poets, lastly even of orators: not that we should indiscriminately rely upon them; for they are apt to

<sup>1</sup> "Eas res puro plouque duello repetundas censo." It was a case prodigiously frequent in the opinion of the Romans.

say what may serve their party, their subject, or their cause; but because, when many at different times and places affirm the same thing for certain, we may refer this unanimity to some general cause, which, in such questions as these, can be no other than either a right deduction from some natural principle or some common agreement. The former of these denotes the law of nature; the latter, that of nations: the difference whereof must be understood, not by the language of these testimonies, for writers are very prone to confound the two words, but from the nature of the subject. For whatever cannot be clearly deduced from true premises, and yet appears to have been generally admitted, must have had its origin in free consent. . . . The sentences of poets and orators have less weight than those of history; and we often make use of them, not so much to corroborate what we say, as to throw a kind of ornament over it." "I have abstained," he adds afterwards, "from all that belongs to a different subject, as what is expedient to be done; since this has its own science, that of politics, which Aristotle has rightly treated by not intermingling any thing extraneous to it; while Bodin has confounded that science with this which we are about to treat. If we sometimes allude to utility, it is but in passing, and distinguishing it from the question of justice."<sup>1</sup>

87. Grotius derives the origin of natural law from the sociable character of mankind. "Among things common to mankind is the desire of society; that is, not of every kind of society, but of one that is peaceable and ordered according to the capacities of his nature with others of his species. Even in children, before all instruction, a propensity to do good to others displays itself, just as pity in that age is a spontaneous affection." We perceive by this remark, that Grotius looked beyond the merely rational basis of natural law to the moral constitution of human nature. The conservation of such a sociable life is the source of that law which is strictly called natural; which comprehends, in the first place, the abstaining from all that belongs to others, and the restitution of it (if by any means in our possession), the fulfilment of promises, the reparation of injury, and the right of human punishment. In a secondary sense, natural law extends to prudence, temperance, and fortitude, as being suitable to man's nature. And, in a similar lax sense, we have that kind of jus-

Foundation  
of natural  
law.

<sup>1</sup> "Prolegomena in librum de Jure Belli."



tice itself called distributive (*distributiva*), which prefers a better man to a worse, a relation to a stranger, the poorer man to a richer, according to the circumstances of the party and the case.<sup>1</sup> And this natural law is properly defined "the dictate of right reason, pointing out a moral guilt or rectitude to be inherent in any action, on account of its agreement or disagreement with our rational and social nature: and consequently that such an action is either forbidden or enjoined by God, the author of nature."<sup>2</sup> It is so immutable, that God himself cannot alter it; a position which he afterwards limits by a restriction we have seen in Suarez, that if God command any one to be killed, or his goods to be taken, this would not render murder or theft lawful, but, being commanded by the Lord of life and all things, it would cease to be murder or theft. This seems little better than a sophism unworthy of Grotius; but he meant to distinguish between an abrogation of the law of nature, and a dispensation with it in a particular instance. The original position, in fact, is not stated with sufficient precision, or on a right principle.

88. Voluntary or positive law is either human or revealed. The former is either that of civil communities, <sup>Positive law.</sup> which are assemblages of freemen, living in society for the sake of laws and common utility; or that of nations, which derives its obligation from the consent of all or many nations: a law which is to be proved, like all unwritten law, by continual usage and the testimony of the learned. The revealed law he divides in the usual manner, but holds that no part of the Mosaic, so far as it is strictly a law, is at present binding upon us. But much of it is confirmed by the Christian Scriptures, and much is also obligatory by the law of nature. This last law is to be applied, *a priori*, by the conformity of the act in question to the natural and social nature of man; *a posteriori*, by the consent of mankind: the latter argument, however, not being conclusive, but highly probable, when the agreement is found in all, or in all the more civilized nations.<sup>3</sup>

89. Perfect rights, after the manner of the jurists, he distinguishes from imperfect. The former are called *stricta*, our

<sup>1</sup> Id., § 6-10.

<sup>2</sup> "Jus naturale est dictatum recte rationis, indicans actus alios, et ejus convenientiam aut inconvenientiam cum ipso natura rationali ac sociali, lexque moralium

turpitudinem aut necessitatem moralem, ac consequenter ab auctore naturæ dictatum actum aut vetari aut præcipi." — L. i., c. i. § 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* l. c. l.



OWN, properly speaking, the objects of what they styled commutative justice: the latter are denominated fitnesses (*aptitudines*), such as equity, gratitude, and domestic affection prescribe, but which are only the objects of distributive or equitable justice. This distinction is of the highest importance in the immediate subject of the work of Grotius; since it is agreed on all hands that no law gives a remedy for the denial of these; nor can we justly, in a state of nature, have recourse to arms in order to enforce them.<sup>1</sup>

90. War, however, as he now proceeds to show, is not absolutely unlawful either by the law of nature or that of nations, or of revelation. The proof is, as usual with Grotius, very diffuse; his work being, in fact, a magazine of arguments and examples with rather a supererogatory profusion.<sup>2</sup> But the Anabaptist and Quaker superstition has prevailed enough to render some of his refutation not unnecessary. After dividing war into public and private, and showing that the establishment of civil justice does not universally put an end to the right of private war (since cases may arise when the magistrate cannot be waited for, and others where his interference cannot be obtained), he shows that the public war may be either solemn and regular according to the law of nations, or less regular on a sudden emergency of self-defence; classing also under the latter any war which magistrates not sovereign may in peculiar circumstances levy.<sup>3</sup> And this leads him to inquire what constitutes sovereignty; defining, after setting aside other descriptions, that power to be sovereign whose acts cannot be invalidated at the pleasure of any other human authority, except one, which, as in the case of a successor, has exactly the same sovereignty as itself.<sup>4</sup>

91. Grotius rejects the opinion of those who hold the people to be everywhere sovereign, so that they may restrain and punish kings for misgovernment: quoting many authorities for the irresponsibility of kings. Here he lays down the principles of non-resistance, which he more fully inculcates in the next chapter. But this is done with many distinctions as to the nature of the principality,

Perfect and imperfect rights.

Lawful cause of war.

Resistance by subjects unlawful.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 1. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C. 2.

<sup>3</sup> C. 3.

<sup>4</sup> "Summa potestas illa dicitur, cujus actus alterius juri non subiacet, ita ut alterius voluntatis humane arbitrio irriti possint reddi."—§ 7.

which may be held by very different conditions. He speaks of patrimonial kingdoms, which, as he supposes, may be alienated like an inheritance. But, where the government can be traced to popular consent, he owns that this power of alienation should not be presumed to be comprised in the grant. Those, he says, are much deceived, who think that, in kingdoms where the consent of a senate or other body is required for new laws, the sovereignty itself is divided; for those restrictions must be understood to have been imposed by the prince on his own will, lest he should be entrapped into something contrary to his deliberate intention.<sup>1</sup> Among other things in this chapter, he determines that neither an unequal alliance (that is, where one party retains great advantages) nor a feudal homage takes away the character of sovereignty from the inferior; so far, at least, as authority over his own subjects is concerned.

92. In the next chapter, Grotius dwells more at length on the alleged right of subjects to resist their governors, and altogether repels it, with the exception of strict self-defence, or the improbable case of a hostile spirit, on the prince's part, extending to the destruction of his people. Barclay, the opponent of Buchanan and the Jesuits, had admitted the right of resistance against enormous cruelty. If the king has abdicated the government, or manifestly relinquished it, he may, after a time, be considered merely a private person. But mere negligence in government is by no means to be reckoned a relinquishment.<sup>2</sup> And he also observes, that if the sovereignty be divided between a king and part of his subjects, or the whole, he may be resisted by force in usurping their share, because he is no longer sovereign as to that; which he holds to be the case, even if the right of war be in him; since that must be understood of a foreign war, and it could not be maintained that those who partake the sovereignty have not the right to defend it; in which predicament a king may lose even his own share by the right of war. He proceeds to the case of usurpation; not such as is warranted by long prescription, but while the circumstances that led to the unjust possession subsist. Against such an usurper he thinks it law-

<sup>1</sup> § 75.

<sup>2</sup> Si rex aut alius quis Imperium abiecit, aut commisit, habet pro derelicto, in eum post id tempus omnia licent, quoniam

in privatum. Sed minime pro derelicto habere rem censendus est qui eam tractat negligenter." — C. 4, § 2.

ful to rebel, so long as there is no treaty or voluntary act of allegiance, at least if the government *de jure* sanctions the insurrection. But, where there may be a doubt whether the lawful ruler has not acquiesced in the usurpation, a private person ought rather to stand by possession, than to take the decision upon himself.<sup>1</sup>

93. The right of war, which we must here understand in the largest sense, — the employment of force to resist force, though by private men, — resides in all mankind. Solon, he says, taught us that those commonwealths would be happy wherein each man thought the injuries of others were like his own.<sup>2</sup> The mere sociability of human nature ought to suggest this to us. And, though Grotius does not proceed with this subject, he would not have doubted that we are even bound by the law of nature, not merely that we have a right, to protect the lives and goods of others against lawless violence, without the least reference to positive law or the command of a magistrate.<sup>3</sup> If this has been preposterously doubted, or affected to be doubted, in England, of late years, it has been less owing to the pedantry which demands an express written law upon the most pressing emergency, than to lukewarmness, at the best, in the public cause of order and justice. The expediency of vindicating these by the slaughter of the aggressors must depend on the peculiar circumstances; but the right is paramount to any positive laws, even if (which with us is not the case) it were difficult to be proved from them.

94. We now arrive at the first and fundamental inquiry, What is the right of self-defence, including the defence of what is our own? There can, says Grotius, be no just cause of war (that is, of using force; for he is now on the most general ground) but injury. For this reason, he will not admit of wars to preserve the balance of power. An imminent injury to ourselves or our property renders repulsion of the aggressor by force legitimate. But here he argues rather weakly and inconsistently through excess of charity; and, acknowledging the strict right of killing one who would otherwise kill us, thinks it more praiseworthy

All men  
naturally  
have right  
of war.

Right  
of self-  
defence.

<sup>1</sup> § 20.  
<sup>2</sup> Εἰ δὲ τῶν ἀδικουμένων οὐκ ἔστω  
οὐ μὴ ἀδικημένοι περιβάλλονται καὶ  
ἀδικῶσι τοὺς ἀδικούντας. "Ut cer-

tera desint vinces la, sufficit humane sa-  
lutis communitio."

<sup>3</sup> He lays this down expressly after  
wards. L. ii. c. 21.

to accept the alternative.<sup>1</sup> The right of killing one who inflicts a smaller personal injury, he wholly denies; and with respect to a robber, while he admits he may be slain by natural law, is of opinion that the gospel has greatly limited the privilege of defending our property by such means. Almost all jurists and theologians of his day, he says, carry it farther than he does.<sup>2</sup> To public warfare he gives a greater latitude than to private self-defence, but without assigning any satisfactory reason: the true reason being, that so rigid a scheme of ethics would have rendered his book an Utopian theory, instead of a practicable code of law.

95. Injury to our rights, therefore, is a just cause of war. But what are our rights? What is property? whence does it come? what may be its subjects? in whom does it reside? Till these questions are determined, we can have but crude and indefinite notions of injury, and, consequently, of the rights we have to redress it. The disquisition is necessary, but it must be long; unless, indeed, we acquiesce in what we find already written, and seek for no stable principles upon which this grand and primary question in civil society (the rights of property and dominion) may rest. Here then begins what has seemed to many the abandonment by Grotius of his general subject, and what certainly suspends, for a considerable time, the inquiry into international law, but still not, as it seems to me, an episodic digression, at least for the greater part, but a natural and legitimate investigation, springing immediately from the principal theme of the work, connected with it more closely at several intervals, and ultimately reverting into it. But of this the reader will judge as we proceed with the analysis.

96. Grotius begins with rather too romantic a picture of the early state of the world, when men lived on the spontaneous fruits of the earth, with no property, except in what each had taken from the common mother's lap. But this happy condition did not, of course, last very long; and mankind came to separate and exclusive possession, each for himself, and against the world. Original occupancy by persons, and division of lands by the commu-

Its origin  
and limita-  
tions.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. II. c. 1, § 8. Gronovius observes pitifully and truly on this: "Melius occidit quam occidere injuria, non melius occidit injuria quam occidere jure."

<sup>2</sup> "Hodie omnes ferme tam arisonesuli quam theologi doceant recte homines a nobis interdictorum defendendos causa." — § 12.



nity, he rightly holds to be the two sources of territorial propriety. Occupation is of two sorts; one by the community (*per universitatem*), the other (*per fundos*) by several possession. What is not thus occupied is still the domain of the state. Grotius conceives that mankind have reserved a right of taking what belongs to others, in extreme necessity. It is a still more remarkable limitation of the right of property, that it carries very far his notions of that of transit; maintaining that not only rivers, but the territory itself, of a state may be peaceably entered, and that permission cannot be refused, consistently with natural law, even in the case of armies: nor is the apprehension of incurring the hostility of the power, who is thus attacked by the army passing through our territory, a sufficient excuse.<sup>1</sup> This, of course, must now be exploded. Nor can, he thinks, the transit of merchandise be forbidden or impeded by levying any further tolls than are required for the incident expenses. Strangers ought to be allowed to settle, on condition of obeying the laws, and even to occupy any waste tracts in the territory;<sup>2</sup> a position equally untenable. It is less unreasonably that he maintains the general right of mankind to buy what they want, if the other party can spare it; but he extends too far his principle, that no nation can be excluded by another from privileges which it concedes to the rest of the world. In all these positions, however, we perceive the enlarged and philanthropic spirit of the system of Grotius, and his disregard of the usages of mankind when they clashed with his Christian principles of justice. But, as the very contrary supposition has been established in the belief of the present generation, it may be doubtful whether his own testimony will be thought sufficient.

97. The original acquisition of property was, in the infancy of human societies, by division or by occupancy: it is now by occupancy alone. Paulus has reckoned as a mode of original acquisition, if we have caused any thing to exist, "*Si quid ipsi, ut in rerum natura esset, fecimus.*" This, though not well expressed, must mean the produce of labor. Grotius observes, that this resolves itself into a continuance of a prior right, or a new one by occupancy, and therefore no

<sup>1</sup> "Sic etiam metus ab eo in quem negandum transitum non valet." Lib. II. § 2, § 12.

<sup>2</sup> § 16, 17.



peculiar mode of acquisition. In those things which naturally belong to no one, there may be two sorts of occupation — dominion or sovereignty, and property. And in the former sense at least, rivers, and bays of the sea, are capable of occupation. In what manner this may be done, he explains at length. But those who occupy a portion of the sea have no right to obstruct others in fishing. This had been the subject of a controversy of Grotius with Sweden: the one in the *Mare Liberum* denying, the other in the *Mare Clausum* asserting, the right of England to exclude the fishermen of Holland from the sea which she asserted to be her own.

98. The right of occupancy exists as to things desolate, or abandoned by their owners. But it is of more importance to consider the presumptions of some <sup>sort of</sup> relinquishment by sovereign states, as distinguished from mere prescription. The non-claim of the owner, during a long period, seems the only means of giving a right where none originally existed. It must be the silent acquiescence of one who knows his rights and has his free will. But, when this abandonment has once taken place, it leaves no room for doubt; for he who is not born, Grotius says, has no rights: "*Ejus qui nondum est natus nullum est jus.*"<sup>1</sup>

99. A right over persons may be acquired in three ways, — by generation, by their consent, by their crime. In children, we are to consider three periods, — that of <sup>Right over person by generation</sup> imperfect judgment, or infancy; that of adult age in the father's family; and that of emancipation, or their familiarisation, when they have ceased to form a part of it. In the first of these, a child is capable of property in possession, but not in enjoyment; in the second, he is subject to the parent, only in actions which affect the family: in the third, he is wholly his own master. All beyond this is positive law. The paternal power was almost peculiar to the Romans, though the Persians are said to have had something of the same. Grotius, we perceive, was no ally of those who elevated the patriarchal power, in order to found upon it a despotic polity; nor does he raise it by any means so high as Bodin. The customs of Eastern nations would, perhaps, have warranted somewhat more than he concedes.<sup>2</sup>

100. Consent is the second mode of acquiring dominion.

The consociation of male and female is the first species of it, which is principally in marriage, for which the promise of the woman to be faithful is required. But he thinks that there is no mutual obligation by the law of nature; which seems designed to save the polygamy of the patriarchs. He then discusses the chief questions as to divorce, polygamy, clandestine marriages, and incest; holding, that no unions are forbidden by natural law, except in the direct line. Concubines, in the sense of the Roman jurisprudence, are true Christian wives.<sup>1</sup>

101. In all other consociations except marriage, it is a rule that the majority can bind the minority. Of these, the principal is a commonwealth. And here he maintains the right of every citizen to leave his country, and that the state retains no right over those whom it has banished. Subjection, which may arise from one kind of consent, is either private or public: the former is of several species, among which adoption, in the Roman sense, is the noblest, and servitude the meanest. In the latter case, the master has not the right of life and death over his servants, though some laws give him impunity. He is perplexed about the right over persons born in slavery, since his theory of its origin will not support it. But in the case of public subjection, where one state becomes voluntarily subject to another, he finds no difficulty about the unborn, because the people is the same, notwithstanding the succession of individuals; which seems paying too much deference to a legal fiction.<sup>2</sup>

102. The right of alienating altogether the territory, he grants to patrimonial sovereigns; but he denies that a part can be separated from the rest without its consent, either by the community or by the sovereign, however large his authority may be. This he extends to subjection of the kingdom to vassalage. The right of alienating private property by testament is founded, he thinks, in natural law;<sup>3</sup> a position wherein I can by no means concur. In conformity with this, he derives the right of succession by intestacy from the presumed intention of the deceased, and proceeds to dilate on the different rules of succession established by civil laws. Yet the rule, that paternal and maternal heirs shall take respect

Right of  
alienating  
subjects.

Alienation  
by testa-  
ment.

<sup>1</sup> G. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Id.

<sup>3</sup> C. 8, § 11.

lively what descended from the ancestors on each side, he conceives to be founded in the law of nature, though subject to the right of bequest.<sup>1</sup>

103. In treating of the acquisition of property by the law of nations, he means only the arbitrary constitutions of the Roman and other codes. Some of these he deems founded in no solid reason, though the law-givers of every country have a right to determine such matters as they think fit. Thus the Roman law recognizes no property in animals *feræ naturæ*, which that of modern nations gives, he says, to the owner of the soil where they are found, not unreasonably any more than the opposite maxim is unreasonable. So of a treasure found in the earth, and many other cases, wherein it is hard to say that the law of nature and reason prescribes one rule more than another.<sup>2</sup>

Rights of  
property  
by positive  
law.

104. The rights of sovereignty and property may terminate by extinction of the ruling or possessing family without provision of successors. Slaves then become free; and subjects, their own masters: for there can be no new right by occupancy in such. But a people or community may cease to exist, though the identity of persons, or even of race, is not necessary for its continuance. It may expire by voluntary dispersion, or by subjugation to another state. But mere change of place by simultaneous emigration will not destroy a political society, much less a change of internal government. Hence, a republic becoming a monarchy, it stands in the same relation to other communities as before, and, in particular, is subject to all its former debts.<sup>3</sup>

Extinction  
of rights.

<sup>1</sup> G. 7. In this chapter, Grotius decides that parents are not bound by strict justice to maintain their children. The case is stronger the other way, in return for early protection. Barbeyrac thinks that alimony is due to children by strict right during infancy.

<sup>2</sup> G. 2. At the end of this chapter, Grotius unfortunately raises a question, his solution of which led him open to censure. He inquires to whom the colonies formerly subject to the Roman Empire belong. And here he comes to the inescapable paradox, that that empire, and the rights of the citizens of Rome, still existed. Grouvius bitterly

remarks, in a note on this passage: "Mirum est hoc loco summum virum, cum in præcipua questione non male sentiret, in tot salubris ac conjuicte, totque monstris et chimæris confusisse, ut aliquid novum diceret, et Germanis potius iudicium deberet, quam illis et Persarum placeret." This, however, is very uncandid, as Barbeyrac truly points out; since neither of these could take much interest in a theory which reserved a supremacy over the world to the Roman people. It is probably the weakest passage in all the writings of Grotius, though there are too many which do not enhance his fame.

105. In a chapter on the obligations which the right of property imposes on others than the proprietor, we find some of the more delicate questions in the casuistry of natural law, such as relate to the *bona fide* possessor of another's property. Grotius, always siding with the stricter moralists, asserts that he is bound not only to restore the substance, but the intermediate profits, without any claim for the valuable consideration which he may have paid. His commentator Barbeyrac, of a later and laxer school of casuistry, denies much of this doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

106. That great branch of ethics which relates to the obligation of promises has been so diffusively handled by the casuists as well as philosophers, that Grotius deserves much credit for the brevity with which he has laid down the simple principles, and discussed some of the more difficult problems. That more promises, or *nuda pacta*, where there is neither mutual benefit, nor what the jurists call synallagmatic contract, are binding on the conscience, whatever they may be, or ought to be, in law, is maintained against a distinguished civilian, Francis Connan; nor does Barbeyrac seem to dispute this general tenet of moral philosophers. Puffendorf, however, says that there is a tacit condition in promises of this kind that they can be performed without great loss to the promiser; and Cicero holds them to be released, if their performance would be more detrimental to one party than serviceable to the other. This gives a good deal of latitude; but perhaps they are, in such cases, open to compensation without actual fulfilment. A promise given without deliberation, according to Grotius himself, is not binding. Those founded on deceit or error admit of many distinctions; but he determines, in the celebrated question of extorted promises, that they are valid by the natural, though their obligation may be annulled by the civil, law. But the promisee is bound to release a promise thus unduly obtained.<sup>2</sup> These instances are sufficient

<sup>1</sup> C. 10. Our own jurisprudence goes upon the principles of Grotius, and even denies the possessor by a bad title, though *bona fide*, any indemnification for what he may have laid out to the benefit of the property; which seems hardly consonant to the strictest rules of natural law.

<sup>2</sup> C. 11, § 7. It is not very probable that the promisee will fulfil this obligation in such a case; and the decision of

Grotius, though conformable to that of the theological casuists in general, is justly rejected by Puffendorf and Barbeyrac, as well as by many writers of the last century. The principle seems to be, that right and obligation, in matters of agreement, are correlative; and, where the first does not arise, the second cannot exist. Adam Smith and Paley incline to think the promise ought, under certain

to show the spirit in which Grotius always approaches the decision of moral questions; serious and learned, rather than profound in seeking a principle, or acute in establishing a distinction. In the latter quality, he falls much below his annotator Barbeyrac, who had, indeed, the advantage of coming nearly a century after him.

107. In no part of his work has Grotius dwelt so much on the rules and distinctions of the Roman law as in his chapter on contracts; nor was it very easy or desirable to avoid it.<sup>1</sup> The wisdom of those great men, from the fragments of whose determinations the existing jurisprudence of Europe, in subjects of this kind, has been chiefly derived, could not be set aside without presumption, nor appropriated without ingratitude. Less fettered, at least in the best age of Roman jurisprudence, by legislative interference than our modern lawyers have commonly been, they resorted to no other principles than those of natural justice. That the Roman law, in all its parts, coincides with the best possible platform of natural jurisprudence, it would be foolish to assert; but that in this great province, or rather demesne-land, of justice, the regulation of contracts between man and man, it does not considerably deviate from the right line of reason, has never been disputed by any one in the least conversant with the Pandects.

108. It will be manifest, however, to the attentive reader of Grotius, in this chapter, that he treats the subject of contract as a part of ethics rather than of jurisprudence; and it is only by the frequent parallelism of the two sciences that the contrary could be suspected. Thus he maintains, that, equality being the principle of the contract by sale, either party is forced to restore the difference arising from a misapprehension of the other, even without his own fault; and this whatever may be the amount, though the civil law gives a remedy only where the difference exceeds one-half of the price.<sup>2</sup> And in several other places he

circumstances, to be kept; but the reasons they give are not founded on the *justitia expletiva*, which the proper obligation of promises, as such, requires. It is also a proof how little the moral sense of mankind goes along with the rigid casuists in this respect, that no one is blamed for defending himself against a

bond given through duress or illegal violence, if the plea be a true one.

In a subsequent passage, l. iii. c. 10, § 4, Grotius seems to carry this theory of the duty of releasing an unjust promise so far as to deny the obligation of the latter, and thus circuitously to agree with the opposite class of casuists.

<sup>1</sup> C. 12.

<sup>2</sup> § 12.



diverges equally from that law. Not that he ever contemplated what Smith seems to have meant by "natural jurisprudence," a theory of the principles which ought to run through, and to be the foundation of, the laws of all nations. But he knew that the judge in the tribunal, and the inward judge in the breast, even where their subjects of determination appear essentially the same, must have different boundaries to their jurisdiction; and that, as the general maxims and inflexible forms of external law, in attempts to accommodate themselves to the subtilities of casuistry, would become uncertain and arbitrary, so the finer emotions of the conscience would lose all their moral efficacy by restraining the duties of justice to that which can be enforced by the law. In the course of this twelfth chapter, we come to a question much debated in the time of Grotius,—the lawfulness of usury. After admitting, against the common opinion, that it is not repugnant to the law of nature, he yet maintains the prohibition in the Mosaic code to be binding on all mankind.<sup>1</sup> An extraordinary position, it would seem, in one who had denied any part of that system to be truly an universal law. This was, however, the usual determination of casuists; but he follows it up, as was also usual, with so many exceptions as materially relax and invalidate the application of his rule.

109. The next chapter, on promissory oaths, is a corollary to the last two. It was the opinion of Grotius, as it Promissory oaths. had been of all theologians, and, in truth, of all mankind, that a promise or contract not only becomes more solemn, and entails on its breach a severer penalty, by means of this adjuration of the Supreme Being, but may even acquire a substantial validity by it, in cases where no prior obligation would subsist.<sup>2</sup> This chapter is distinguished by a more than usually profuse erudition. But, notwithstanding the rigid observance of oaths which he deems incumbent by natural and revealed law, he admits of a considerable authority in the civil magistrate, or other superior, as a husband or father, to annul the oaths of inferiors beforehand, or to dispense with them afterwards; not that they can release a moral obligation, but that the obligation itself is incurred under a tacit condition of their consent. And he

seems, in rather a singular manner, to hint a kind of approval of such dispensations by the church.<sup>1</sup>

110. Whatever has been laid down by Grotius in the last three chapters as to the natural obligations of mankind, has an especial reference to the main purport of this great work, the duties of the supreme power. But the engagements of sovereigns give rise to many questions which cannot occur in those of private men. In the chapter which ensues, on the promises, oaths, and contracts of sovereigns, he confines himself to those engagements which immediately affect their subjects. These it is of great importance, in the author's assumed province of the general confessor or casuist of kings, to place on a right footing; because they have never wanted subservient counsellors, who would wrest the law of conscience, as well as that of the land, to the interests of power. Grotius, in denying that the sovereign may revoke his own contracts, extends this case to those made by him during his minority, without limitation to such as have been authorized by his guardians.<sup>2</sup> His contracts with his subjects create a true obligation, of which they may claim, though not enforce, the performance. He hesitates whether to call this obligation a civil or only a natural one; and, in fact, it can only be determined by positive law.<sup>3</sup> Whether the successors of a sovereign are bound by his engagements, must depend, he observes, on the political constitution, and on the nature of the engagement. Those of an usurper he determines not to be binding, which should probably be limited to domestic contracts, though his language seems large enough to comprise engagements towards foreign states.<sup>4</sup>

Engagements of kings towards subjects.

111. We now return from what, in strict language, may pass for a long digression, though not a needless one, to the main stream of international law. The title of the fifteenth chapter is on Public Treaties. After several divisions, which it would at present be thought unnecessary to specify so much at length, Grotius enters on a question not then settled by theologians, whether alliances with infidel powers were, in any circumstances, lawful. Francis I. had given

Public treaties.

<sup>1</sup> § 20. "Ex hoc fundamento defendi possunt absolutiones juramentorum, quæ olim a principibus, nunc ipsorum principum voluntate, quo magis cautum est pietati, ab ecclesiæ præsidiis exercentur."

<sup>2</sup> C. 14, § 1.

<sup>3</sup> § 6.

<sup>4</sup> "Contractibus vero eorum qui sine jure imperium invaserunt, non tenentur populi aut veri reges, nam hi jus obligandi populum non habuerunt." § 14.

great scandal in Europe by his league with the Turk. And, though Grotius admits the general lawfulness of such alliances, it is under limitations which would hardly have borne out the court of France in promoting the aggrandizement of the common enemy of Christendom. Another and more extensive head in the casuistry of nations relates to treaties that have been concluded without the authority of the sovereign. That he is not bound by these engagements is evident as a leading rule; but the course which, according to natural law, ought to be taken in such circumstances, is often doubtful. The famous capitulation of the Roman army at the Caudine Forks is in point. Grotius, a rigid casuist, determines that the senate were not bound to replace their army in the condition from which the treaty had delivered them. And this seems to be a rational decision, though the Romans have sometimes incurred the censure of ill faith for their conduct. But if the sovereign has not only by silence acquiesced in the engagement of his ambassador or general, which of itself, according to Grotius, will not amount to an implied ratification, but recognized it by some overt act of his own, he cannot afterwards plead the defect of sanction.<sup>1</sup>

112. Promises consist externally in words, really in the intention of the parties. But, as the evidence of this Their interpretation. intention must usually depend on words, we should adapt our general rules to their natural meaning. Common usage is to determine the interpretation of agreements, except where terms of a technical sense have been employed. But if the expressions will bear different senses, or if there is some apparent inconsistency in different clauses, it becomes necessary to collect the meaning conjecturally, from the nature of the subject, from the consequences of the proposed interpretation, and from its bearing on other parts of the agreement. This serves to exclude unreasonable and unfair constructions from the equivocal language of treaties, such as was usual in former times to a degree which the greater prudence of contracting parties, if not their better faith, has rendered impossible in modern Europe. Among other rules of interpretation, whether in private or public engagements, he lays down one, familiar to the jurists, but concerning the validity of which some have doubted,—that things favorable, as they style them, or conferring a benefit, are to be construed largely;

<sup>1</sup> C. 16.

things odious, or onerous to one party, are not to be stretched beyond the letter. Our own law, as is well known, adopts this distinction between remedial and penal statutes; and it seems (wherever that which is favorable in one sense is not odious in another) the most equitable principle in public conventions. The celebrated question, the cause, or, as Polybius more truly calls it, the pretext, of the second Punic War, whether the terms of a treaty binding each party not to attack the allies of the other shall comprehend those who have entered subsequently into alliance, seems, but rather on doubtful grounds, to be decided in the negative. Several other cases from history are agreeably introduced in this chapter.<sup>1</sup>

113. It is often, he observes, important to ascertain whether a treaty be personal or real; that is, whether it affect only the contracting sovereign or the state. The treaties of republics are always real or permanent, even if the form of government should become monarchical; but the converse is not true as to those of kings, which are to be interpreted according to the probable meaning where there are no words of restraint or extension. A treaty subsists with a king though he may be expelled by his subjects; nor is it any breach of faith to take up arms against an usurper, with the lawful sovereign's consent. This is not a doctrine which would now be endured.<sup>2</sup>

114. Besides those rules of interpretation which depend on explaining the words of an engagement, there are others which must sometimes be employed to extend or limit the meaning beyond any natural construction. Thus, in the old law-case, a bequest, in the event of the testator's posthumous son dying, was held valid where none was born; and instances of this kind are continual in the books of jurisprudence. It is equally reasonable sometimes to restrain the terms of a promise, where they clearly appear to go beyond the design of the promiser, or where supervenient circumstances indicate an exception which he would infallibly have made. A few sections in this place seem, perhaps, more fit to have been inserted in the eleventh chapter.

115. There is a natural obligation to make amends for injury to the natural rights of another, which is extended, by means of the establishment of property and of civil society,

<sup>1</sup> C. 16.

<sup>2</sup> § 27.

to all which the laws have accorded him.<sup>1</sup> Hence a cor-  
 relative right arises, but a right which is to be dis-  
 Obligation distinguished from fitness or merit. The jurists were  
 to repair injury. accustomed to treat expletive justice, which consists  
 in giving to every one what is strictly his own, separately  
 from attributive justice, the equitable and right dispensa-  
 tion of all things according to desert. With the latter,  
 Grotius has nothing to do; nor is he to be charged with  
 introducing the distinction of perfect and imperfect rights,  
 if, indeed, those phrases are as objectionable as some have  
 accounted them. In the far greater part of this chapter, he  
 considers the principles of this important province of natural  
 law, the obligation to compensate damage, rather as it affects  
 private persons than sovereign states. As, in most in-  
 stances, this falls within the jurisdiction of civil tribunals,  
 the rules laid down by Grotius may, to a hasty reader, seem  
 rather intended as directory to the judge, than to the con-  
 science of the offending party. This, however, is not by any  
 means the case: he is here, as almost everywhere else, a  
 master in morality, and not in law. That he is not obsequi-  
 ously following the Roman law, will appear by his determin-  
 ing against the natural responsibility of the owner for  
 injuries committed, without his fault, by a slave or a beast.<sup>2</sup>  
 But sovereigns, he holds, are answerable for the piracies and  
 robberies of their subjects when they are able to prevent them.  
 This is the only case of national law which he discusses;  
 but it is one of high importance, being, in fact, one of the  
 ordinary causes of public hostility. This liability, however,  
 does not exist where subjects, having obtained a lawful com-  
 mission by letters-of-marque, become common pirates, and do  
 not return home.

116. Thus far, the author begins in the eighteenth chapter,  
 Rights by we have treated of rights founded on natural law,  
 Law of with some little mixture of the arbitrary law of  
 nations. nations. We come now to those which depend  
 wholly on the latter. Such are the rights of ambassadors.  
 We have now, therefore, to have recourse more to the usage  
 of civilized people than to theoretical principles. The prac-  
 tice of mankind has, in fact, been so much more uniform as to

<sup>1</sup> C. 17.

<sup>2</sup> This is against what we read in the  
 6th title of the 4th book of the Institutes:  
 "Si quadrupes pauperiem fecerit." Pau-

peries, in the legal sense, which has also  
 some classical authority, means *dam-*  
*nari sine injuria.*



the privileges of ambassadors than other matters of national intercourse, that they early acquired the authority and denomination of public law. The obligation to receive ambassadors from other sovereign states, the respect due to them, their impunity in offences committed by their principals or by themselves, are not, indeed, wholly founded on custom, to the exclusion of the reason of the case; nor have the customs of mankind, even here, been so unlike themselves as to furnish no contradictory precedents: but they afford, perhaps, the best instance of a tacit agreement, distinguishable both from moral right and from positive convention, which is specifically denominated the law of nations. It may be mentioned, that Grotius determines in favor of the absolute impunity of ambassadors; that is, their irresponsibility to the tribunals of the country where they reside, in the case of personal crimes, and even of conspiracy against the government. This, however, he founds altogether upon what he conceives to have been the prevailing usage of civilized states.<sup>1</sup>

117. The next chapter, on the right of sepulture, appears more excursive than any other in the whole treatise. The right of sepulture can hardly become a public question, except in time of war; and, as such, it might have been shortly noticed in the third book. It supplies Grotius, however, with a brilliant prodigality of classical learning.<sup>2</sup> But the next is far more important. It is entitled On Punishments. The injuries done to us by others give rise to our right of compensation, and to our right of punishment. We have to examine the latter with the more care, that many have fallen into mistakes from not duly apprehending the foundation and nature of punishment. Punishment is, as Grotius rather quaintly defines it, "*Malum passionis, quod infligitur ob malum actionis*,"—evil inflicted on another for the evil which he has committed. It is not a part of attributive, and hardly of expletive justice; nor is it, in its primary design, proportioned to the guilt of the criminal, but to the magnitude of the crime. All men have naturally a right to punish crimes, except those who are themselves equally guilty; but, though the criminal would have no ground to complain, the mere pleasure of revenge is not a sufficient motive to warrant us: there must be an useful end

<sup>1</sup> C. 18.<sup>2</sup> C. 19.

to render punishment legitimate. This end may be the advantage of the criminal himself, or of the injured party, or of mankind in general. The interest of the injured party here considered is not that of reparation, which, though it may be provided for in punishment, is no proper part of it, but security against similar offences of the guilty party or of others. All men may naturally seek this security by punishing the offender; and, though it is expedient in civil society that this right should be transferred to the judge, it is not taken away where recourse cannot be had to the law. Every man may, even by the law of nature, punish crimes by which he has sustained no injury; the public good of society requiring security against offenders, and rendering them common enemies.<sup>1</sup>

118. Grotius next proceeds to consider whether these rights of punishment are restrained by revelation, and concludes that a private Christian is not at liberty to punish any criminal, especially with death, for his own security or that of the public; but that the magistrate is expressly empowered by Scripture to employ the sword against malefactors. It is rather an excess of scrupulousness, that he holds it unbecoming to seek offices which give a jurisdiction in capital cases.<sup>2</sup>

119. Many things essentially evil are not properly punishable by human laws. Such are thoughts and intentions, errors of frailty, or actions from which, though morally wrong, human society suffers no mischief; or the absence of such voluntary virtues as compassion and gratitude. Nor is it always necessary to inflict lawful punishment, many circumstances warranting its remission. The ground of punishment is the guilt of the offender; its motive is the advantage expected from it. No punishment should exceed what is deserved; but it may be diminished according to the prospect of utility, or according to palliating circumstances. But, though punishments should bear proportion to offences, it does not follow that the criminal should suffer no more evil than he has occasioned, which would give him too easy a measure of retribution. The general tendency of all that Grotius has said in this chapter is remarkably indulgent and humane, beyond the practice or even the philosophy of his age.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. 26.<sup>2</sup> 14.<sup>3</sup> 14.

120. War is commonly grounded upon the right of punishing injuries; so that the general principles upon which this right depends upon mankind ought well to be understood, before we can judge of so great a matter of national law. States, Grotius thinks, have a right, analogous to that of individuals out of society, to punish heinous offences against the law of nature or of nations, though not affecting themselves, or even any other independent community. But this is to be done very cautiously, and does not extend to violations of the positive divine law, or to any merely barbarous and irrational customs. Wars undertaken only on this score are commonly suspicions. But he goes on to determine that war may be justly waged against those who deny the being and providence of God, though not against idolaters, much less for the sake of compelling any nation to embrace Christianity, unless they prosecute its professors, in which case they are justly liable to punishment. He pronounces strongly in this place against the prosecution of heretics.<sup>1</sup>

121. This is the longest chapter in the work of Grotius. Several of his positions, as the reader may probably have observed, would not bear a close scrutiny; the rights of individuals in a state of nature, of magistrates in civil society, and of independent communities, are not kept sufficiently distinct; the equivocal meaning of right, as it exists correlatively between two parties, and as it comprehends the general obligations of moral law, is not always guarded against. It is, notwithstanding these defects, a valuable commentary, regard being had to the time when it appeared, on the principles both of penal jurisprudence and of the rights of war.

122. It has been a great problem, whether the liability to punishment can be transmitted from one person to another. This may be asked as to those who have been concerned in the crime, and those who have not. In the first case, they are liable as for their own offence, in having commanded, connived at, permitted, assisted, the actors in the crime before or after its perpetration. States are answerable for the delinquencies of their subjects when unpunished. They are also bound either to punish, or to deliver up, those who take refuge within their dominions from the justice of their own country. He seems, however, to admit afterwards, that they need only command such persons

Their responsibility.

to quit the country. But they have a right to inquire into and inform themselves of the guilt alleged; the ancient privileges of suppliants being established for the sake of those who have been unjustly persecuted at home. The practice of modern Europe, he owns, has limited this right of demanding the delivery or punishment of refugees within narrow bounds. As to the punishment of those who have been wholly innocent of the offence, Grotius holds it universally unjust, but distinguishes it from indirect evil, which may often fall on the innocent. Thus, when the estate of a father is confiscated, his children suffer, but are not punished; since their succession was only a right contingent on his possession at his death.<sup>1</sup> It is a consequence from this principle, that a people, so far subject to its sovereign as to have had no control upon his actions, cannot justly incur punishment on account of them.

123. After distinguishing the causes of war into pretexts and motives, and setting aside wars without any assignable justification as mere robberies, he mentions several pretexts which he deems insufficient; such as the aggrandizement of a neighbor, his construction of fortresses, the right of discovery where there is already a possessor, however barbarous, the necessity of occupying more land. And here he denies, both to single men and to a people, the right of taking up arms in order to recover their liberty. He laughs at the pretended right of the emperor or of the pope to govern the world, and concludes with a singular warning against wars undertaken upon any pretended explanation of scriptural prophecies.<sup>2</sup> It will be anticipated, from the scrupulousness of Grotius in all his casuistry, that he enjoins sovereigns to abstain from war in a doubtful cause, and to use all convenient methods of avoiding it by conference, arbitration, or even by lot. Single combat itself, as a mode of lot, he does not wholly reject in this place. In answer to a question often put, whether a war can

Insufficient  
causes of  
war.

Duty of  
avoiding it.

<sup>1</sup> C. 21, § 10. Hence it would follow, by the principle of Grotius, that our law of forfeiture in high treason is just, being part of the direct punishment of the guilty; but that of attainder, or corruption of blood, is unjust, being an infliction on the innocent alone. I incline to concur in this distinction, and think it at least plausible, though it was seldom or never taken in the discussions con-

cerning those two laws. Confiscation is no more unjust towards the posterity of an offender than fine, from which of course it only differs in degree; and, on the other hand, the law has as much right to exclude that posterity from enjoying property at all, as from enjoying that which descends from a third party through the blood, as we call it, of a criminal ancestor

<sup>2</sup> C. 23.

be just on both sides, he replies, that, in relation to the cause or subject, it cannot be so, since there cannot be two opposite rights; but, since men may easily be deceived as to the real right, a war may be just on both sides with respect to the agents.<sup>1</sup> In another part of his work, he observes that resistance, even where the cause is not originally just, may become such by the excess of the other party.

124. The duty of avoiding war, even in a just cause, as long as possible, is rather part of moral virtue in a large sense than of mere justice. But, besides the obligations imposed on us by humanity and by Christian love, it is often expedient, for our own interests, to avoid war. Of this, however, he says little; it being plainly a matter of civil prudence with which he has no concern.<sup>2</sup> Dismissing, therefore, the subject of this chapter, he comes to the justice of wars undertaken for the sake of others. Sovereigns, he conceives, are not bound to take up arms in defence of any one of their subjects who may be unjustly treated. Hence a state may abandon those whom it cannot protect without great loss to the rest; but whether an innocent subject may be delivered up to an enemy, is a more debated question. Soto and Vasquez, casuists of great name, had denied this: Grotius, however, determines it affirmatively. This seems a remarkable exception from the general inflexibility of his adherence to the rule of right. For on what principle of strict justice can a people, any more than private persons, sacrifice, or put in jeopardy, the life of an innocent man? Grotius is influenced by the supposition, that the subject ought voluntarily to surrender himself into the hands of the enemy, for the public good; but no man forfeits his natural rights by refusing to perform an action not of strict social obligation.<sup>3</sup>

And expediency.

War for the sake of other subjects.

125. Next to subjects are allies, whom the state has bound itself to succor; and friendly powers, though without alliance, may also be protected from unjust attack. This extends even to all mankind; though war in behalf of strangers is not obligatory. It is also lawful to deliver the subjects of others from extreme manifest oppression of their rulers; and, though this has often been a mere pretext, we are not on that account to

Allies.

Strangers.

<sup>1</sup> C. 22.

<sup>2</sup> C. 24.

<sup>3</sup> C. 25.



deny the justice of an honest interference. . He even thinks the right of foreign powers, in such a case, more unequivocal than that of the oppressed people themselves. At the close of this chapter, he protests strongly against those who serve in any cause for the mere sake of pay; and holds them worse than the common executioner, who puts none but criminals to death.<sup>1</sup>

126. In the twenty-sixth and concluding chapter of this second book, Grotius investigates the lawfulness of bearing arms at the command of superiors, and determines that subjects are indispensably bound not to serve in a war which they conceive to be clearly unjust. He even inclines, though admitting the prevailing opinion to be otherwise, to think, that, in a doubtful cause, they should adhere to the general moral rule in case of doubt, and refuse their personal service. This would evidently be impracticable, and ultimately subversive of political society. It, however, denotes the extreme scrupulosity of his mind. One might smile at another proof of this, where he determines that the hangman, before the performance of his duty, should satisfy himself as to the justice of the sentence.<sup>2</sup>

127. The rights of war, that is, of commencing hostility, have thus far been investigated with a comprehensiveness that has sometimes almost hidden the subject. We come now, in the third book, to rights in war. Whatever may be done in war is permitted either by the law of nature or that of nations. Grotius begins with the first. The means morally, though not physically, necessary to attain a lawful end, are themselves lawful; a proposition which he seems to understand relatively to the rights of others, not to the absolute moral quality of actions; distinctions which are apt to embarrass him. We have, therefore, a right to employ force against an enemy, though it may be the cause of suffering to innocent persons. The principles of natural law authorize us to prevent neutrals from furnishing an enemy with the supplies of war, or with any thing else essential for his resistance to our just demands of redress, such as provisions in a state of siege. And it is remarkable that he refers this latter question to natural law, because he had not found any clear decision of it by the positive law of nations.<sup>3</sup>

None to  
serve in an  
unjust  
war.

Rights in  
war.

<sup>1</sup> C. 26.

<sup>2</sup> C. 28.

<sup>3</sup> L. III. c. 1.

128. In acting against an enemy, force is the nature of war. But it may be inquired whether deceit is not also a lawful means of success. The practice of nations, and the authority of most writers, seem to warrant it. Grotius dilates on different sorts of artifice, and, after admitting the lawfulness of such as deceive by indications, comes to the question of words equivocal or wholly false. This he first discusses on the general moral principle of veracity, more prolixly, and with more deference to authority, than would suit a modern reader; yet this basis is surely indispensable for the support of any decision in public casuistry. The right, however, of employing falsehood towards an enemy, which he generally admits, does not extend to promises, which are always to be kept, whether express or implied, especially when confirmed by oath; and more greatness of mind, as well as more Christian simplicity, would be shown by abstaining wholly from falsehood in war. The law of nature does not permit us to tempt any one to do that which in him would be criminal, as to assassinate his sovereign, or to betray his trust; but we have a right to make use of his voluntary offers.<sup>1</sup>

129. Grotius now proceeds from the consideration of natural law or justice to that of the general customs of mankind, in which, according to him, the arbitrary law of nations consists. By this, in the first place, though naturally no one is answerable for another, it has been established, that the property of every citizen is, as it were, mortgaged for the liabilities of the state to which he belongs. Hence, if justice is refused to us by the sovereign, we have a right to indemnification out of the property of his subjects. This is commonly called reprisals; and it is a right which every private person would enjoy, were it not for the civil laws of most countries, which compel him to obtain the authorization of his own sovereign or of some tribunal. By an analogous right, the subjects of a foreign state have sometimes been seized in return for one of our own subjects unjustly detained by their government.<sup>2</sup>

Rules and  
customs of  
nations.  
Reprisals.

130. A regular war, by the law of nations, can only be waged between political communities. Wherever there is a semblance of civil justice and fixed law, such a community exists, however violent may be its actions. But a body of pirates or robbers are not one. Absolute inde-

Declarations  
of war.

<sup>1</sup> L. III. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C. 2.

pendence, however, is not required for the right of war. A formal declaration of war, though not necessary by the law of nature, has been rendered such by the usage of civilized nations. But it is required even by the former, that we should demand reparation for an injury, before we seek redress by force. A declaration of war may be conditional or absolute; and it has been established as a ratification of regular hostilities, that they may not be confounded with the unwarranted acts of private men. No interval of time is required for their commencement after declaration.<sup>1</sup>

131. All is lawful during war, in one sense of the word, which by the law and usage of nations is dispensable. And this, in formal hostilities, is as much the right of one side as of the other. The subjects of our enemy, whether active on his side or not, become liable to these extreme rights of slaughter and pillage; but it seems that, according to the law of nations, strangers should be exempted from them, unless, by remaining in the country, they serve his cause. Women, children, and prisoners may be put to death; quarter or capitulation for life refused. On the other hand, if the law of nations is less strict in this respect than that of nature, it forbids some things which naturally might be allowable means of defence, as the poisoning an enemy, or the wells from which he is to drink. The assassination of an enemy is not contrary to the law of nations, unless by means of traitors; and even this is held allowable against a rebel or robber, who are not protected by the rules of formal war. But the violation of women is contrary to the law of nations.<sup>2</sup> The rights of war with respect to enemies' property are unlimited, without exception even of churches or sepulchral monuments, sparing always the bodies of the dead.<sup>3</sup>

132. By the law of nature, Grotius thinks that we acquire a property in as much of the spoil as is sufficient to indemnify us, and to punish the aggressor. But the law of nations carries this much farther, and gives an unlimited property in all that has been acquired by conquest, which mankind are bound to respect. This right commences as soon as the enemy has lost all chance of recovering his losses; which is, in movables, as soon as they are in a place within our sole power. The transfer of property in territories is not so speedy. The goods of neutrals are not thus transferred, when found in the cities or

Rights by  
law of na-  
tions over  
enemies.

<sup>1</sup> C. 2.

<sup>2</sup> C. 4.

<sup>3</sup> C. 5.

on board the vessels of an enemy. Whether the spoil belongs to the captors, or to their sovereign, is so disputed a question, that it can hardly be reckoned a part of that law of nations, or universal usage, with which Grotius is here concerned. He thinks, however, that what is taken in public enterprises appertains to the state; and that this has been the general practice of mankind. 'The civil laws of each people may modify this, and have frequently done so.'

133. Prisoners, by the law of nations, become slaves of the captor, and their posterity also. He may Prisoners become slaves. treat them as he pleases with impunity. This has been established by the custom of mankind, in order that the conqueror might be induced to spare the lives of the vanquished. Some theologians deny the slave, even when taken in an unjust war, the right of making his escape; from whom Grotius dissents. But he has not a right, in conscience, to resist the exercise of his master's authority. This law of nations as to the slavery of prisoners, as he admits, has not been universally received, and is now abolished in Christian countries, out of respect to religion.<sup>2</sup> But, strictly, as an individual may be reduced into slavery, so may a whole conquered people. It is, of course, at the discretion of the conqueror to remit a portion of his right, and to leave as much of their liberties and possessions untouched as he pleases.<sup>3</sup>

134. The next chapter relates to the right of postliminium; one depending so much on the peculiar fictions of the Roman jurists, that it seems strange to discuss it as part of an universal law of nations at all. Nor does it properly belong to the rights of war which are between belligerent parties. It is certainly consonant to natural justice, that a citizen returning from captivity should be fully restored to every privilege and all property that he had enjoyed at home. In modern Europe, there is little to which the *jus postliminii* can, even by analogy, be applied. It has been determined, in courts of admiralty, that vessels recaptured after a short time do not revert to their owner. This chapter must be reckoned rather episodic.<sup>4</sup>

135. We have thus far looked only at the exterior right, accorded by the law of nations to all who wage regular hostilities in a just or unjust quarrel. 'This right is one of impunity

alone; but before our own conscience, or the tribunal of moral approbation in mankind, many things hitherto spoken of as lawful must be condemned. In the first place, an unjust war renders all acts of force committed in its prosecution unjust, and binds the aggressor before God to reparation. Every one, general or soldier, is responsible in such cases for the wrong he has commanded or perpetrated. Nor can any one knowingly retain the property of another obtained by such a war, though he should come to the possession of it with good faith.<sup>1</sup> And as nothing can be done, consistently with moral justice, in an unjust war, so, however legitimate our ground for hostilities may be, we are not at liberty to transgress the boundaries of equity and humanity. In this chapter, Grotius, after dilating with a charitable abundance of examples and authorities in favor of clemency in war, even towards those who have been most guilty in provoking it, specially indicates women, old men, and children, as always to be spared; extending this also to all whose occupations are not military. Prisoners are not to be put to death, nor are towns to be refused terms of capitulation. He denies that the law of retaliation, or the necessity of striking terror, or the obstinate resistance of an enemy, dispenses with the obligation of saving his life. Nothing but some personal crime can warrant the refusal of quarter, or the death of a prisoner. Nor is it allowable to put hostages to death.<sup>2</sup>

136. All unnecessary devastation ought to be avoided, such as the destruction of trees, of houses, especially ornamental and public buildings, and of every thing not serviceable in war, nor tending to prolong it, as pictures and statues. Temples and sepulchres are to be spared for the same or even stronger reasons. Though it is not the object of Grotius to lay down any political maxims, he cannot refrain in this place from pointing out several considerations of expediency, which should induce us to restrain the license of arms within the limits of natural law.<sup>3</sup> There is no right by nature to more booty, strictly speaking, than is sufficient for our indemnity, wherein are included the expenses of the war; and the property of innocent persons, being subjects of our enemies, is only liable in failure of those who are primarily aggressors.<sup>4</sup>

Moderation  
required as  
to spoil.

<sup>1</sup> C. 10.

<sup>2</sup> C. 11.

<sup>3</sup> C. 12.

<sup>4</sup> C. 13.



187. The persons of prisoners are only liable, in strict moral justice, so far as is required for satisfaction of our injury. The slavery into which they may be reduced ought not to extend farther than an obligation of perpetual servitude in return for maintenance. The power over slaves by the law of nature is far short of what the arbitrary law of nations permits, and does not give a right of exacting too severe labor, or of inflicting punishment beyond desert. The *peculium*, or private acquisitions of a slave by economy or donation, ought to be reckoned his property. Slaves, however, captured in a just war, though one in which they have had no concern, are not warranted in conscience to escape, and recover their liberty. But the children of such slaves are not in servitude by the law of nature, except so far as they have been obliged to their master for subsistence in infancy. With respect to prisoners, the better course is to let them redeem themselves by a ransom, which ought to be moderate.<sup>1</sup>

And as to  
prisoners.

188. The acquisition of that sovereignty which was enjoyed by a conquered people, or by their rulers, is not only legitimate, so far as is warranted by the punishment they have deserved, or by the value of our own loss, but also so far as the necessity of securing ourselves extends. This last is what is often unsafe to remit out of clemency. It is a part of moderation in victory to incorporate the conquered with our own citizens on equal terms, or to leave their independence on reasonable precautions for our own security. If this cannot be wholly conceded, their civil laws and municipal magistracies may be preserved, and, above all, the free exercise of their religion. The interests of conquerors are as much consulted, generally, as their reputation, by such lenient use of their advantages.<sup>2</sup>

Also in  
conquest.

189. It is consonant to natural justice that we should restore to the original owners all of which they have been despoiled in an unjust war, when it falls into our hands by a lawful conquest, without regard to the usual limits of postliminium. Thus, if an ambitious state comes to be stripped of its usurpations, this should be not for the benefit of the conqueror, but of the ancient possessors. Length of time, however, will raise the presumption of abandonment.<sup>3</sup> Nothing should be taken

And in  
restriction  
to right  
owners.

<sup>1</sup> C. 14.

<sup>2</sup> C. 15.

<sup>3</sup> C. 16.

in war from neutral states, except through necessity and with compensation. The most ordinary case is that of the passage of troops. The neutral is bound to strict impartiality in a war of doubtful justice.<sup>1</sup> But it seems to be the opinion of Grotius, that, by the law of nature, every one, even a private man, may act in favor of the innocent party as far as the rights of war extend, except that he cannot appropriate to himself the possessions of the enemy; that right being one founded on indemnification. But civil and military laws have generally restrained this to such as obey the express order of their government.<sup>2</sup>

140. The license of war is restrained either by the laws of nature and nations, which have been already discussed, or by particular engagement. The obligation of promises extends to enemies, who are still parts of the great society of mankind. Faith is to be kept even with tyrants, robbers, and pirates. He here again adverts to the case of a promise made under an unjust compulsion; and possibly his reasoning on the general principle is not quite put in the most satisfactory manner. It would now be argued that the violation of engagements towards the worst of mankind, who must be supposed to have some means of self-defence, on account of which we propose to treat with them, would produce a desperation among men in similar circumstances injurious to society. Or it might be urged, that men do not lose by their crimes a right to the performance of all engagements, especially when they have fulfilled their own share in them, but only of such as involve a positive injustice towards the other party. In this place he repeats his former doctrine, that the most invalid promise may be rendered binding by the addition of an oath. It follows, from the general rule, that a prince is bound by his engagements to rebel subjects; above all, if they have had the precaution to exact his oath. And thus a change in the constitution of a monarchy may legitimately take place, and it may become mixed instead of absolute by the irrevocable concession of the sovereign. The rule, that promises made under an unjust compulsion are not obligatory, has no application in a public and regular war.<sup>3</sup> Barbeyrac remarks on this, that if a conqueror,

Promises to  
enemies and  
pirates.

<sup>1</sup> C. 17.

<sup>2</sup> C. 19.

<sup>3</sup> C. 19, § 11. There seems, as has been intimated above, to be some inconsistency in the doctrine of Grotius with

respect to the general obligation of such promises, which he maintains in the second book; and now, as far as I collect his meaning, denies by implication

like Alexander, subdues an unoffending people with no specious pretext at all, he does not perceive why they should be more bound in conscience to keep the promises of obedience they may have been compelled to enter into, than if he had been an ordinary bandit. And this remark shows us, that the celebrated problem in casuistry, as to the obligation of compulsory promises, has far more important consequences than the payment of a petty sum to a robber. In two cases, however, Grotius holds that we are dispensed from keeping an engagement towards an enemy. One of these is, when it has been conditional, and the other party has not fulfilled his part of the convention. This is, of course, obvious, and can only be open to questions as to the precedence of the condition. The other case is where we retain what is due to us by way of compensation, notwithstanding our promise. This is permissible in certain instances.<sup>1</sup>

141. The obligation of treaties of peace depends on their being concluded by the authority which, according to the constitution of the state, is sovereign for this purpose. Kings who do not possess a patrimonial sovereignty cannot alienate any part of their dominions without the consent of the nation or its representatives: they must even have the consent of the city or province which is thus to be transferred. In patrimonial kingdoms, the sovereign may alienate the whole, but not always a part, at pleasure. He seems, however, to admit an ultimate right of sovereignty, or *dominium eminens*, by which all states may dispose of the property of their subjects, and consequently alienate it for the sake of a great advantage, but subject to the obligation of granting them an indemnity. He even holds that the community is naturally bound to indemnify private subjects for the losses they sustain in war, though this right of reparation may be taken away by civil laws. The right of alienation by a treaty of peace is only questionable between the sovereign and his subjects: foreign states may presume its validity in their own favor.<sup>2</sup>

Treaties  
concluded  
by com-  
petent  
authority.

142. Treaties of peace are generally founded on one of two principles; that the parties shall return to the condition wherein they were before the commencement of hostilities, or that they shall retain what they possess at their conclusion. The last is to be presumed in a case

Matters  
relating to  
them.

of doubtful interpretation. A treaty of peace extinguishes all public grounds of quarrel, whether known to exist or not, but does not put an end to the claims of private men subsisting before the war, the extinguishment of which is never to be presumed. The other rules of interpretation which he lays down are, as usual with him, derived rather from natural equity than the practice of mankind, though with no neglect or scorn of the latter. He maintains the right of giving an asylum to the banished, but not of receiving large bodies of men who abandon their country.<sup>1</sup>

143. The decision of lot may be adopted in some cases, in order to avoid a war, wherein we have little chance of resisting an enemy. But that of single combat, according to Grotius's opinion, though not repugnant to the law of nature, is incompatible with Christianity; unless in the case where a party, unjustly assailed, has no other means of defence. Arbitration by a neutral power is another method of settling differences, and in this we are bound to acquiesce. Wars may also be terminated by implicit submission or by capitulation. The rights which this gives to a conqueror have been already discussed. He concludes this chapter with a few observations upon hostages and pledges. With respect to the latter, he holds that they may be reclaimed after any lapse of time, unless there is a presumption of tacit abandonment.<sup>2</sup>

144. A truce is an interval of war, and does not require a fresh declaration at its close. No act of hostility is lawful during its continuance: the infringement of this rule by either party gives the other a right to take up arms without delay. Safe conducts are to be construed liberally, rejecting every meaning of the words which does not reach their spirit. Thus a safe conduct to go to a place implies the right of returning unmolested. The ransom of prisoners ought to be favored.<sup>3</sup> A state is bound by the conventions in war made by its officers, provided they are such as may reasonably be presumed to lie within their delegated authority, or such as they have a special commission to warrant, known to the other contracting party. A state is also bound by its tacit ratification in permitting the execution of any part of such a treaty, though in itself not obligatory, and also by availing itself of any advantage thereby. Grotius dwells afterwards on many distinctions relating to this subject, which,

<sup>1</sup> C. 20.<sup>2</sup> 14.<sup>3</sup> C. 21.



however, as far as they do not resolve themselves into the general principle, are to be considered on the ground of positive regulation.<sup>1</sup>

145. Private persons, whether bearing arms or not, are as much bound as their superiors by the engagements they contract with an enemy. This applies particularly to the parole of a prisoner. The engagement not to serve again, though it has been held null by some jurists, as contrary to our obligation towards our country, is valid. It has been a question, whether the state ought to compel its citizens to keep their word towards the enemy. The better opinion is, that it should do so; and this has been the practice of the most civilized nations.<sup>2</sup> Those who put themselves under the protection of a state engage to do nothing hostile towards it. Hence such actions as that of Zopyrus, who betrayed Babylon under the guise of a refugee, are not excusable. Several sorts of tacit engagements are established by the usage of nations, as that of raising a white flag in token of a desire to suspend arms. These are exceptions from the general rule which authorizes deceit in war.<sup>3</sup> In the concluding chapter of the whole treatise, Grotius briefly exhorts all states to preserve good faith and to seek peace at all times, upon the mild principles of Christianity.<sup>4</sup>

Those of  
private  
persons.

146. If the reader has had the patience to make his way through the abstract of Grotius, *De Jure Belli*, that we have placed before him, he will be fully prepared to judge of the criticisms made upon this treatise by Paley and Dugald Stewart. "The writings of Grotius and Puffendorf," says the former, "are of too forensic a cast, too much mixed up with civil law and with the jurisprudence of Germany, to answer precisely the design of a system of ethics, the direction of private consciences in the general conduct of human life." But it was not the intention of Grotius (we are not at present concerned with Puffendorf) to furnish a system of ethics; nor did any one ever hold forth his treatise in this light. Upon some most important branches of morality he has certainly dwelt so fully as to answer the purpose of "directing the private conscience in the conduct of life." The great aim, however, of his inquiries was to ascertain the principles of natural right applicable to independent communities.

Objections  
to Grotius,  
made by  
Paley, un-  
reasonable

<sup>1</sup> C. 22.

<sup>2</sup> C. 22.

<sup>3</sup> C. 24.

<sup>4</sup> C. 25.



147. Paley, it must be owned, has a more specious ground of accusation in his next charge against Grotius for the profusion of classical quotations. "To any thing more than ornament they can make no claim. To propose them as serious arguments, gravely to attempt to establish or fortify a moral duty by the testimony of a Greek or Roman poet, is to trifle with the reader, or rather take off his attention from all just principles in morals."

148. A late eminent writer has answered this from the text of Grotius, but in more eloquent language than Grotius could have employed. "Another answer," says Mackintosh, "is due to some of those who have criticised Grotius; and that answer might be given in the words of Grotius himself. He was not of such a stupid and servile cast of mind, as to quote the opinions of poets or orators, of historians and philosophers, as those of judges from whose decision there was no appeal. He quotes them, as he tells us himself, as witnesses, whose conspiring testimony, mightily strengthened and confirmed by their discordance on almost every other subject, is a conclusive proof of the unanimity of the whole human race on the great rules of duty and the fundamental principles of morals. On such matters, poets and orators are the most unexceptionable of all witnesses: for they address themselves to the general feelings and sympathies of mankind; they are neither warped by system, nor perverted by sophistry; they can attain none of their objects, they can neither please nor persuade, if they dwell on moral sentiments not in unison with those of their readers. No system of moral philosophy can surely disregard the general feelings of human nature, and the according judgment of all ages and nations. But where are these feelings and that judgment recorded and preserved? In those very writings which Grotius is gravely blamed for having quoted. The usages and laws of nations, the events of history, the opinions of philosophers, the sentiments of orators and poets, as well as the observation of common life, are, in truth, the materials out of which the science of morality is formed; and those who neglect them are justly chargeable with a vain attempt to philosophize without regard to fact and experience,—the sole foundation of all true philosophy."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mackintosh, *Discourse on the Study of the Law of Nature and Nations*, p. 25 (ed. 1823).

149. The passage in Grotius which has suggested this noble defence will be found above. It will be seen, on reference to it, that he proposes to quote the poets and orators cautiously, and rather as ornamental than authoritative supports of his argument. In no one instance, I believe, will he be found to "enforce a moral duty," as Paley imagines, by their sanction. It is, nevertheless, to be fairly acknowledged, that he has sometimes gone a good deal farther than the rules of a pure taste allow in accumulating quotations from the poets; and that, in an age so impatient of prolixity as the last, this has stood much in the way of the general reader.

150. But these criticisms of Paley contain very trifling censure in comparison with the unbounded scorn <sup>Censures</sup> poured on Grotius by Dugald Stewart, in his first <sup>of Stewart.</sup> Dissertation on the Progress of Philosophy. I have never read these pages of an author whom I had unfortunately not the opportunity of personally knowing, but whose researches have contributed so much to the delight and advantage of mankind, without pain and surprise. It would be too much to say, that, in several parts of this Dissertation, by no means in the first class of Stewart's writings, other proofs of precipitate judgment do not occur; but that he should have spoken of a work so distinguished by fame, and so effective, as he himself admits, over the public mind of Europe, in terms of unmingled depreciation, without having done more than glanced at some of its pages, is an extraordinary symptom of that tendency towards prejudices, hasty but inveterate, of which this eminent man seems to have been not a little susceptible. The attack made by Stewart on those who have taken the law of nature and nations as their theme, and especially on Grotius, who stands forward in that list, is protracted for several pages; and it would be tedious to examine every sentence in succession. Were I to do so, it is not, in my opinion, an exaggeration to say, that almost every successive sentence would lie open to criticism. But let us take the chief heads of accusation.

151. "Grotius," we are told, "under the title *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, has aimed at a complete system <sup>Answer to</sup> of natural law. Condillac says, that he chose the <sup>them.</sup> title in order to excite a more general curiosity." The total error of this passage must appear to every one who

has seen what Grotius declares to have been his primary object. He chose the title because it came nearest to express that object,—the ascertainment of laws binding on independent communities in their mutual relations, whether of war or peace. But as it was not possible to lay down any solid principles of international right till the notions of right of sovereignty, of dominion over things and persons, of war itself, were clearly established, it became indispensable to build upon a more extensive basis than later writers on the law of nations, who found the labor performed to their hands, have thought necessary. All ethical philosophy, even in those parts which bear a near relation to jurisprudence and to international law, was, in the age of Grotius, a chaos of incoherent and arbitrary notions, brought in from various sources,—from the ancient schools, from the Scriptures, the fathers, the canons, the casuistical theologians, the rabbins, the jurists, as well as from the practice and sentiments of every civilized nation, past and present, the Jews, the Greeks and Romans, the trading republics, the chivalrous kingdoms of modern Europe. If Grotius has not wholly disentangled himself from this bewildering maze, through which he painfully traces his way by the lights of reason and revelation, he has at least cleared up much, and put others still oftener in the right path, where he has not been able to follow it. Condillac, as here quoted by Stewart, has anticipated Paley's charge against Grotius, of laboring to support his conclusions by the authority of others, and of producing a long string of quotations to prove the most indubitable propositions. In what degree this very exaggerated remark is true, we have already seen. But it should be kept in mind, that neither the disposition of the age in which Grotius lived, nor the real necessity of illustrating every part of his inquiries by the precedent usages of mankind, would permit him to treat of moral philosophy as of the abstract theorems of geometry. If his erudition has sometimes obstructed or misled him, which perhaps has not so frequently happened as these critics assume, it is still true, that a contemptuous ignorance of what has been done or has been taught, such as belonged to the school of Condillac and to that of Paley, does not very well qualify the moral philosopher for inquiry into the principles which are to regulate human nature.

152. "Among the different ideas," Stewart observes, "which

have been formed of natural jurisprudence, one of the most common, especially in the earlier systems, supposes its object to be, to lay down those rules of justice which would be binding on men living in a social state without any positive institutions; or, as it is frequently called by writers on this subject, living together in a state of nature. This idea of the province of jurisprudence seems to have been uppermost in the mind of Grotius in various parts of his treatise." After some conjectures on the motives which led the early writers to take this view of national law, and admitting that the rules of justice are in every case precise and indispensable, and that their authority is altogether independent of that of the civil magistrate, he deems it "obviously absurd to spend much time in speculating about the principles of this natural law, as applicable to men before the institution of governments." It may possibly be as absurd as he thinks it. But where has Grotius shown, that this condition of natural society was uppermost in his thoughts? Of the state of nature, as it existed among individuals before the foundation of any civil institutions, he says no more than was requisite in order to exhibit the origin of those rights which spring from property and government. But that he has, in some part especially of his second book, dwelt upon the rules of justice binding on men subsequent to the institution of property, but independently of positive laws, is most certain; nor is it possible for any one to do otherwise who does not follow Hobbes in confounding moral with legal obligation; a theory to which Mr. Stewart was of all men the most averse.

153. Natural jurisprudence is a term that is not always taken in the same sense. It seems to be of English origin; nor am I certain, though my memory may deceive me, that I have ever met with it in Latin or in French. Strictly speaking, as jurisprudence means the science of law, and is especially employed with respect to the Roman, natural jurisprudence must be the science of morals, or the law of nature. It is, therefore, in this sense, co-extensive with ethics, and comprehends the rules of temperance, liberality, and benevolence, as much as those of justice. Stewart, however, seems to consider this idea of jurisprudence as an arbitrary extension of the science derived from the technical phraseology of the Roman law. "Some vague notion of this kind," he says, "has manifestly given birth to many of the digressions of



Grotius." It may have been seen by the analysis of the entire treatise of Grotius, above given, that none of his digressions, if such they are to be called, have originated in any vague notion of an identity, or proper analogy, between the strict rules of justice and those of the other virtues. The Aristotelian division of justice into commutative and distributive, which Grotius has adopted, might seem in some respect to bear out this supposition; but it is evident, from the context of Stewart's observations, that he was referring only to the former species, or justice in its more usual sense, the observance of perfect rights, whose limits may be accurately determined, and whose violation may be redressed.

154. Natural jurisprudence has another sense imposed upon it by Adam Smith. According to this sense, its object, in the words of Stewart, is "to ascertain the general principles of justice which ought to be recognized in every municipal code, and to which it ought to be the aim of every legislator to accommodate his institutions." Grotius, in Smith's opinion, was "the first who attempted to give the world any thing like a system of those principles which ought to run through, and to be the foundation of, the laws of all nations; and his treatise on the laws of peace and war, with all its imperfections, is, perhaps, at this day the most complete book that has yet been given on the subject."

155. The first, probably, in modern times, who conceived the idea of an universal jurisprudence was Lord Bacon. He places among the desiderata of political science the province of universal justice or the sources of law. "*Id nunc agatur, ut fontes justitiæ et utilitatis publicæ petantur, et in singulis juris partibus character quidam et idea justæ exhibeatur, ad quem particularium regnorum et rerumpublicarum leges probare, atque inde emendationem moliri, quisque, cui hæc cordi erit et curæ, possit.*"<sup>1</sup> The maxims which follow are an admirable illustration of the principles which should regulate the enactment and expression of laws, as well as of much that should guide, in a general manner, the decision of courts of justice. They touch very slightly, if at all, any subject which Grotius has handled; but certainly come far closer to natural jurisprudence, in the sense of Smith, inasmuch as they contain principles which have no limitation to the circumstances of particular societies. These maxims of Bacon, and all

<sup>1</sup> De Augustiæ, lib. viii.



others that seem properly to come within the province of jurisprudence in this sense, which is now become not uncommon, the science of universal law, are resolvable partly into those of natural justice, partly into those of public expediency. Little, however, could be objected against the admission of universal jurisprudence, in this sense, among the sciences. But if it is meant that any systematic science, whether by the name of jurisprudence or legislation, can be laid down as to the principles which ought to determine the institutions of all nations, or that, in other words, the laws of each separate community ought to be regulated by any universal standard, in matters not depending upon eternal justice, we must demur to receiving so very disputable a proposition. It is probable that Adam Smith had no thoughts of asserting it; yet his language is not very clear, and he seems to have assigned some object to Grotius distinct from the establishment of natural and international law. "Whether this was," says Stewart, "or was not, the leading object of Grotius, it is not material to decide; but, if this was his object, it will not be disputed that he has executed his design in a very desultory manner, and that he often seems to have lost sight of it altogether, in the midst of those miscellaneous speculations on political, ethical, and historical subjects, which form so large a portion of his treatise, and which so frequently succeed each other without any apparent connection or common aim."

156. The unfairness of this passage it is now hardly incumbent upon me to point out. The reader has been enabled to answer that no political speculation will be found in the volume *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, unless the disquisition on the origin of human society is thus to be denominated; that the instances continually adduced from history are always in illustration of the main argument; and that what are here called ethical speculations are in fact the real subject of the book, since it avowedly treats of obligations on the conscience of mankind, and especially of their rulers. Whether the various topics in this treatise "succeed each other without apparent connection or common aim," may best be seen by the titles of the chapters, or by the analysis of their contents. There are certainly a very few of these that have little in common, even by deduction or analogy, with international law; though scarce any, I think, which do not rise naturally out of the previous discussion. Exuberances of this kind

are so common in writers of great reputation, that, where they do not transgress more than Grotius has done, the censure of irrelevancy has been always reckoned hypercritical.

157. "The Roman system of jurisprudence," Mr. Stewart proceeds "seems to have warped, in no inconsiderable degree, the notions of Grotius on all questions connected with the theory of legislation, and to have diverted his attention from that philosophical idea of law so well expressed by Cicero: 'Non a prætoris edicto, neque a duodecim tabulis, sed penitus ex intima philosophia hauriendam juris disciplinam.' In this idolatry, indeed, of the Roman law, he has not gone so far as some of his commentators, who have affirmed that it is only a different name for the law of nature; but that his partiality for his professional pursuits has often led him to overlook the immense difference between the state of society in ancient and modern Europe will not, I believe, now be disputed." It is probable that it will be disputed by all who are acquainted with Grotius. The questions connected with the theory of legislation which he has discussed are chiefly those relating to the acquisition and alienation of property in some of the earlier chapters of the second book. That he has not, in these disquisitions, adopted all the determinations of the Roman jurists, is certain: whether he may in any particular instance have adhered to them more than the best theory of legislation would admit, is a matter of variable opinion. But Stewart, wholly unacquainted with the civil laws, appears to have much underrated their value. In most questions of private right, they form the great basis of every modern legislation; and as all civilized nations, including our own, have derived a large portion of their jurisprudence from this source, so even the theorists, who would disdain to be ranked as disciples of Paulus and Papinian, are not ashamed to be their plagiarists.

158. It has been thrown out against Grotius, by Rousseau,<sup>1</sup> —and the same insinuation may be found in other writers, —that he confounds the fact with the right, and the duties of nations with their practice. How little foundation there is for this calumny is sufficiently apparent to our readers. Scrupulous, as a casuist, to an excess hardly reconcilable with the security and welfare of good men, he was the first, beyond the precincts of the con-

Grotius  
vindicated  
against  
Rousseau.

<sup>1</sup> *Contrat Social.*

sessional or the church, to pour the dictates of a saint-like innocence into the ears of princes. It is true, that in recognizing the legitimacy of slavery, and in carrying too far the principles of obedience to government, he may be thought to have deprived mankind of some of their security against injustice; but this is exceedingly different from a sanction to it. An implicit deference to what he took for divine truth was the first axiom in the philosophy of Grotius. If he was occasionally deceived in his application of this principle, it was but according to the notions of his age; but those who wholly reject the authority must, of course, want a common standard by which his speculations in moral philosophy can be reconciled with their own.

159. I must now quit a subject upon which, perhaps, I have dwelt too long. The high fame of Dugald Stewart has rendered it a sort of duty to vindicate from his hasty censures the memory of one still more illustrious in reputation, till the lapse of time and the fickleness of literary fashion conspired with the popularity of his assailants to magnify his defects, and meet the very name of his famous treatise with a kind of scornful ridicule. That Stewart had never read much of Grotius, or even gone over the titles of his chapters, is very manifest; and he displays a similar ignorance as to the other writers on natural law, who for more than a century afterwards, as he admits himself, exercised a great influence over the studies of Europe. I have commented upon very few, comparatively, of the slips which occur in his pages on this subject.

160. The arrangement of Grotius has been blamed as unscientific by a more friendly judge, Sir James Mackintosh. <sup>His arrangement.</sup> Though I do not feel very strongly the force of his objections, it is evident that the law of nature might have been established on its basis, before the author passed forward to any disquisition upon its reference to independent communities. This would have changed a good deal the principal object that Grotius had in view, and brought his treatise, in point of method, very near to that of Puffendorf. But assuming, as he did, the authority recognized by those for whom he wrote, that of the Scriptures, he was less inclined to dwell on the proof which reason affords for a natural law, though fully satisfied of its validity even without reference to the Supreme Being.

161. The real faults of Grotius, leading to erroneous determinations, seem to be rather an unnecessary scrupulousness, and somewhat of old theological prejudice, from which scarce any man in his age, who was not wholly indifferent to religion, had liberated himself. The notes of Barbeyrac seldom fail to correct this leaning. Several later writers on international law have treated his doctrine of an universal law of nations, founded on the agreement of mankind, as an empty chimera of his invention. But if he only meant by this the tacit consent, or, in other words, the general custom, of civilized nations, it does not appear that there is much difference between his theory and that of Wolf or Vattel.

## CHAPTER V.

## HISTORY OF POETRY FROM 1600 TO 1650.

## SECT. I.—ON ITALIAN POETRY.

Characters of the Poets of the Seventeenth Century—Sometimes too much separated—Marini—Tassoni—Chiabrera.

1. At the close of the sixteenth century, few remained in Italy to whom posterity has assigned a considerable reputation for their poetry. But the ensuing period has stood lower, for the most part, in the opinion of later ages, than any other since the revival of letters.

Low estimation of the Seicentisti.

The *seicentisti*, the writers of the seventeenth century, were stigmatized in modern criticism, till the word has been associated with nothing but false taste and every thing that should be shunned and despised. Those who had most influence in leading the literary judgment of Italy went back, some almost exclusively to the admiration of Petrarch and his contemporaries, some to the various writers who cultivated their native poetry in the sixteenth century. Salvini is of the former class; Muratori, of the latter.<sup>1</sup>

2. The last age, that is the concluding twenty years of the eighteenth century, brought with it, in many respects, a change of public sentiment in Italy. A masculine turn of thought, an expanded grasp of philosophy, a thirst, ardent to excess, for great exploits and noble praise, has distinguished the Italian people of the last fifty years from their progenitors of several preceding generations. It is possible that the enhanced relative importance of the Lombards in their national literature may have not been

Not quite so great as formerly.

<sup>1</sup> Muratori, *Della Perfetta Poeta*, is one of the best books of criticism in the Italian language: in the second volume are com-

tained some remarks by Salvini, a bigoted Florentine.



without its influence in rendering the public taste less fastidious as to purity of language, less fine in that part of æsthetic discernment which relates to the grace and felicity of expression, while it became also more apt to demand originality, nervousness, and the power of exciting emotion. The writers of the seventeenth century may, in some cases, have gained by this revolution; but those of the preceding ages, especially the Petrarchists whom Bembo had led, have certainly lost ground in national admiration.

3. Rubbi, editor of the voluminous collection called *Par-naso Italiano*, had the courage to extol the *scien-tisti* for their genius and fancy, and even to place them, in all but style, above their predecessors. "Give them," he says, "but grace and purity, take from them their capricious exaggerations, their perpetual and forced metaphors, you will think Marini the first poet of Italy; and his followers, with their fulness of imagery and personification, will make you forget their monotonous predecessors. I do not advise you to make a study of the *scientisti*; it would spoil your style, perhaps your imagination: I only tell you that they were the true Italian poets. They wanted a good style, it is admitted; but they were so far from wanting genius and imagination, that these perhaps tended to impair their style."<sup>1</sup>

4. It is probable that every native critic would think some parts of this panegyric, and especially the strongly hyperbolic praise of Marini, carried too far. But I am not sure that we should be wrong in agreeing with Rubbi, that there is as much *catholic* poetry, by which I mean that which is good in all ages and countries, in some of the minor productions of the seventeenth as in those of the sixteenth age. The sonnets, especially, have more individuality and more meaning. In this, however, I should wish to include the latter portion of the seventeenth century. Salli, a writer of more taste and judgment than Rubbi, has recently taken the same side, and remarked the superior originality, the more determined individuality, the greater variety of subjects; above all, what the Italians now must value, the more earnest patriotism of the later poets.<sup>2</sup> Those

<sup>1</sup> *Par-naso Italiano*, vol. xli. (Avvertimento.); Rubbi, however, gives but two, out of his long collection in fifty volumes, to the writers of the seventeenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Salli, *Hist. Litt. de l'Italie* (continuation de Ginguené), vol. xli. p. 424.

immediately before us, belonging to the first half of the century, are less numerous than in the former age: the sonneteers especially have produced much less; and in the collections of poetry, even in that of Rubbi, notwithstanding his eulogy, they take up very little room. Some, however, have obtained a durable renown, and are better known in Europe than any, except the Tassos, that flourished in the last fifty years of the golden age.

5. It must be confessed, that the praise of a masculine genius, either in thought or language, cannot be bestowed on the poet of the seventeenth century <sup>Adone of Marini.</sup> whom his contemporaries most admired, — Giovanni Battista Marini. He is, on the contrary, more deficient than all the rest in such qualities, and is indebted to the very opposite characteristics for the sinister influence which he exerted on the public taste. He was a Neapolitan by birth, and gave to the world his famous *Adone* in 1623. As he was then fifty-four years old, it may be presumed, from the character of the poem, that it was in great part written long before; and he had already acquired a considerable reputation by his other works. The *Adone* was received with an unbounded and ill-judging approbation: ill-judging in a critical sense, because the faults of this poem are incapable of defence; but not unnatural, as many parallel instances of the world's enthusiasm have shown. No one had before carried the corruption of taste so far: extravagant metaphors, false thoughts, and conceits on equivocal words, are very frequent in the *Adone*; and its author stands accountable, in some measure, for his imitators, who, during more than half a century, looked up to Marini with emulous folly, and frequently succeeded in greater deviations from pure taste, without his imagination and elegance.

6. The *Adone* is one of the longest poems in the world; containing more than 45,000 lines. He has shown <sup>its charac-</sup> some ingenuity in filling up the canvas of so slight <sup>ter</sup> a story by additional incidents from his own invention, and by long episodes allusive to the times in which he lived. But the subject, expanded so interminably, is essentially destitute of any superior interest, and fit only for an enervated people, barren of high thoughts and high actions, — the Italy, notwithstanding some bright exceptions, of the seventeenth century. If we could overcome this essential source

of weariness, the Adone has much to delight our fancy and our ear. Marini is, more than any other poet, the counterpart of Ovid: his fertility of imagination, his ready accumulation of circumstances and expressions, his easy flow of language, his harmonious versification, are in no degree inferior; his faults are also the same; for in Ovid we have all the overstrained figures and false conceits of Marini. But the Italian poet was incapable of imitating the truth to nature, and depth of feeling, which appear in many parts of his ancient prototype; nor has he as vigorous an expression. Never does Marini rise to any high pitch: few stanzas, perhaps, are remembered by natives for their beauty; but many are graceful and pleasing, all are easy and musical.<sup>1</sup> "Perhaps," says Salfi, "with the exception of Ariosto, no one has been more a poet by nature than he;"<sup>2</sup> a praise, however, which may justly seem hyperbolical to those who recall their attention to the highest attributes of poetry.

7. Marini belongs to that very numerous body of poets, who, delighted with the spontaneity of their ideas, And popularity. never reject any that arise: their parental love forbids all preference; and an impartial law of gavelkind shares their page among all the offspring of their brain. Such were Ovid and Lucan, and such have been some of our own poets of great genius and equal fame. Their fertility astonishes the reader, and he enjoys for a time the abundant banquet; but satiety is too sure a consequence, and he returns with less pleasure to a second perusal. The censure of criticism falls invariably, and sometimes too harshly, on this sort of poetry: it is one of those cases where the critic and the world are most at variance; but the world is apt, in this

<sup>1</sup> Five stanzas of the seventh canto, being a choral song of satyrs and bacchanti, are thrown into *versi stracciali*, and have been accounted by the Italians an extraordinary effort of skill, from the difficulty of sustaining a metre, which is not strong in rhyme, with so much spirit and ease. Each verse also is divided into three parts, themselves separately *stracciali*, though not rhyming. One stanza will make this clear:—

"Hor d' ellera s' adornino, e di pampino  
I giovani, e le vergini più tenere,  
E gemine nell' anima al stampino  
L' immagine di Libero, e di Venere.  
Tutti ardono, <sup>1</sup> accendano, ed avvampino,  
Qual Semele, ch' al folgore si cense;

E cantino a Cupidine, ed a Bromio,  
Con numeri poetici un encomio."

Cant. vii. st. 118.

Though this metrical skill may not be of the highest merit in poetry, it is no more to be slighted than facility of touch in a painter.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. xiv. p. 147. The character of Marini's poetry which this critic has given is in general very just, and in good taste. Corniani (vii. 123) has also done justice, and no more than justice, to Marini. Tiraboschi has hardly said enough in his favor; and as to Muratori, it was his business to restore and maintain a purity of taste, which rendered him severe towards the excesses of such poets as Marini.

instance, to reverse its own judgment, and yield to the tribunal it had rejected. "To Marini," says an eminent Italian writer, "we owe the lawlessness of composition: the ebullition of his genius, incapable of restraint, burst through every bulwark, enduring no rule but that of his own humor, which was all for sonorous verse, bold and ingenious thoughts, fantastical subjects, a phraseology rather Latin than Italian; and, in short, aimed at pleasing by a false appearance of beauty. It would almost pass belief how much this style was admired, were it not so near our own time, that we hear, as it were, the echo of its praise; nor did Dante or Petrarch or Tasso, or perhaps any of the ancient poets, obtain in their lives so much applause."<sup>1</sup> But Marini, who died in 1625, had not time to enjoy much of this glory. The length of this poem, and the diffuseness which produces its length, render it nearly impossible to read through the *Adone*; and it wants that inequality which might secure a preference to detached portions. The story of *Psyche*, in the fourth canto, may perhaps be as fair a specimen of Marini as could be taken: it is not easy to destroy the beauty of that fable, nor was he unfitted to relate it with grace and interest; but he has displayed all the blemishes of his own style.<sup>2</sup>

8. The *Secchia Rapita* of Alessandro Tassoni, published at Paris in 1622, is better known in Europe than Secchia  
Rapita of  
Tassoni. might have been expected from its local subject, idiomatic style, and unintelligible personalities. It turns, as the title imports, on one of the petty wars, frequent among the Italian cities as late as the beginning of the fourteenth century, wherein the Bolognese endeavored to recover the bucket of a well, which the citizens of Modena in a prior incursion had carried off. Tassoni, by a poetical anachronism, mixed this with an earlier contest of rather more dignity between the little republics, wherein Enzo, King of Sardinia, a son of Frederic II., had been made prisoner. He has been reckoned by many the inventor, or at least the reproducer

<sup>1</sup> *Grassimbeni*, li. 470.

<sup>2</sup> The *Adone* has been frequently charged with want of decency. It was put to the ban of the Roman Inquisition: and grave writers have deemed it necessary to protest against its licentiousness. Andréa even goes so far as to declare, that no one can read the *Adone* whose heart as well as taste is not corrupt; and that, both for the

make of good morals and good poetry, it should be taken out of every one's hands. After such invectives, it may seem extraordinary, that, though the poem of Marini must by its nature be rather voluptuous, it is by far less open to such an objection than the *Orlando Furioso*, nor more, I believe, than the *Fairy Queen*. No change is apt to be made so capriciously as this.



in modern times, of the mock-heroic style.<sup>1</sup> Pulci, however, had led the way; and, when Tassoni claims originality, it must be in a very limited view of the execution of his poem. He has certainly more of parody than Pulci could have attempted: the great poems of Ariosto and Tasso, especially the latter, supply him with abundant opportunities for this ingenious and lively, but not spiteful, exercise of wit: and he has adroitly seized the ridiculous side of his contemporary Marini. The combat of the cities, it may be observed, is serious enough, however trifling the cause, and has its due proportion of slaughter; but Tassoni, very much in the manner of the *Morgante Maggiore*, throws an air of ridicule over the whole. The episodes are generally in a still more comic style. A graceful facility and a light humor, which must have been incomparably better understood by his countrymen and contemporaries, make this a very amusing poem. It is exempt from the bad taste of the age; and the few portions where the burlesque tone disappears are versified with much elegance. Perhaps it has not been observed, that the Count de Culagne, one of his most ludicrous characters, bears a certain resemblance to Hudibras, both by his awkward and dastardly appearance as a knight, and by his ridiculous addresses to the lady whom he woos.<sup>2</sup> None, however, will question the originality of Butler.

9. But the poet of whom Italy has, in later times, been far more proud than of Marini or Tassoni, was Chiabrera. Of his long life the greater part fell within the sixteenth century; and some of his poems were published before its close; but he has generally been considered as belonging to the present period. Chiabrera is the founder of a school in the lyric poetry of Italy, rendered afterwards more famous by Guidi, which affected the name of Pindaric. It is the Theban lyre which they boast to strike; it is from the fountain of Dirce that they draw their inspiration; and these allusions are as frequent in their verse, as those to Valclusa

<sup>1</sup> Boileau seems to acknowledge himself indebted to Tassoni for the *Lutrin*, and Pope may have followed both in the first sketch of the *Rape of the Lock*, though what he has added is a purely original conception. But, in fact, the mock-heroic or burlesque style, in a general sense, is so natural, and moreover so common, that it is idle to talk of its inventor. What else is Rabelais' *Don Quixote*, or, in Italian,

the romance of Bertoldo, — all older than Tassoni? What else are the popular tales of children, — John the Giant-kille, and many more? The poem of Tassoni had a very great reputation. Voltaire did it injustice, though it was much in his own line.

<sup>2</sup> Cantos X. and XI. It was intended as a ridicule on Marini, but represents a real personage. Baldi, *ibid.* 147.



and the *Sorga* in the followers of Petrarch. Chiabrera borrowed from Pindar that grandeur of sound, that pomp of epithets, that rich swell of imagery, that unvarying majesty of conception, which distinguish the odes of both poets. He is less frequently harsh or turgid, though the latter blemish has been sometimes observed in him, but wants also the masculine condensation of his prototype; nor does he deviate so frequently, or with so much power of imagination, into such digressions as those which generally shade from our eyes, in a skilful profusion of ornament, the victors of the Grecian games whom Pindar professes to celebrate. The poet of the house of Medici and of other princes of Italy, great at least in their own time, was not so much compelled to desert his immediate subject, as he who was paid for an ode by some wrestler or boxer, who could only become worthy of heroic song by attaching his name to the ancient glories of his native city. The profuse employment of mythological allusions, frigid as it appears at present, was so customary, that we can hardly impute to it much blame; and it seemed peculiarly appropriate to a style which was studiously formed on the Pindaric model.<sup>1</sup> The odes of Chiabrera are often panegyric; and his manner was well fitted for that style, though sometimes we have ceased to admire those whom he extols. But he is not eminent for purity of taste, nor, I believe, of Tuscan language: he endeavored to force the idiom, more than it would bear, by constructions and inversions borrowed from the ancient tongues; and these odes, splendid and noble as they are, bear, in the estimation of critics, some marks of the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> The satirical epistles of Chiabrera are praised by Salfi as written in a moral Horatian tone, abounding with his own experience, and allusions to his time.<sup>3</sup> But in no other kind of poetry has he been so highly successful as in the lyric; and, though the Grecian robe is never cast away, he imitated Anacreon with as much skill as Pindar. "His lighter odes," says Crescimbeni, "are most beautiful and elegant, full of grace, vivacity, spirit, and delicacy, adorned with pleasing inventions, and differing in nothing but language from those of Anacreon. His dithyrambics I hold

<sup>1</sup> Salfi justifies the continual introduction of mythology by the Italian poets, on the ground that it was a part of their national inheritance, associated with the monuments and recollections of their glory. This would be more to the purpose, if

their mythology had not been almost exclusively Greek. But perhaps all that was of classical antiquity might be blended in their sentiments with the memory of Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Salfi, xii. 250.

<sup>3</sup> Id., xiii. 302.

incapable of being excelled, all the qualities required in such compositions being united with a certain nobleness of expression which elevates all it touches upon."<sup>1</sup>

10. The greatest lyric poet of Greece was not more the model of Chiabrera than his Roman competitor was of Testi. "Had he been more attentive to the choice of his expression," says Crescimbeni, "he might have earned the name of the Tuscan Horace." The faults of his age are said to be frequently discernible in Testi; but there is, to an ordinary reader, an Horatian elegance, a certain charm of grace and ease, in his canzoni, which render them pleasing. One of these, beginning, *Ruscelletto orgoglioso*, is highly admired by Muratori, the best, perhaps, of the Italian critics, and one not slow to censure any defects of taste. It apparently alludes to some enemy in the court of Modena.<sup>2</sup> The character of Testi was ambitious and restless, his life spent in seeking and partly in enjoying public offices, but terminated in prison. He had taken, says a later writer, Horace for his model; and perhaps, like him, he wished to appear sometimes a stoic, sometimes an epicurean; but he knew not, like him, how to profit by the lessons either of Zeno or Epicurus, so as to lead a tranquil and independent life.<sup>3</sup>

11. The imitators of Chiabrera were generally unsuccessful: they became hyperbolical and exaggerated. The Translation of Pindar by Alessandro Adimari, though not very much resembling the original, has been praised for its own beauty. But these poets are not to be confounded with the Marinists, to whom they are much superior. Ciampoli, whose Rime were published in 1628, may perhaps be the best after Chiabrera.<sup>4</sup> Several obscure epic poems, some of which are rather to be deemed romances, are commemorated by the last historian of Italian literature. Among these is the Conquest of Granada by Graziani, published in 1650. Salfi justly observes, that the subject is truly epic; but the poem itself seems to be nothing but a series of episodical intrigues without unity. The style, according to the same writer, is redundant, the similes too frequent and monotonous; yet he prefers it to all the heroic poems which had intervened since that of Tasso.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Storia della Volgar Poeta, II. 483.

<sup>2</sup> This canzone is in *Mathias, Compositi*, lib. II. 190.

<sup>3</sup> Salfi, xii. 231.

<sup>4</sup> Salfi, p. 303; Tiraboschi, xi. 364.

<sup>5</sup> Baillet, on the authority of others, speaks less honorably of Ciampoli. N. 1451.

<sup>6</sup> Id. vol. xii. p. 24-129.

## SECT. II.—ON SPANISH POETRY.

Romances—The Argensolas—Villegas—Gongora, and his School

12. The Spanish poetry of the sixteenth century might be arranged in three classes. In the first, we might place that which was formed in the ancient school, though not always preserving its characteristics,—the short trochaic metres, employed in the song or the ballad, altogether national, or aspiring to be such, either in their subjects or in their style. In the second would stand that to which the imitation of the Italians had given rise,—the school of Boscan and Garcilasso; and with these we might place also the epic poems, which do not seem to be essentially different from similar productions of Italy. A third and not inconsiderable division, though less extensive than the others, is composed of the poetry of good sense,—the didactic, semi-satirical Horatian style, of which Mendoza was the founder, and several specimens of which occur in the *Parnaso Español* of Sedano.

The styles of Spanish poetry.

13. The romances of the Cid, and many others, are referred by the most competent judges to the reign of Philip III.<sup>1</sup> These are by no means among the best of Spanish romances; and we should naturally expect that so artificial a style as the imitation of ancient manners and sentiments by poets in wholly a different state of society, though some men of talent might succeed in it, would soon degenerate into an affected mannerism. The Italian style continued to be cultivated: under Philip III., the decline of Spain in poetry, as in arms and national power, was not so striking as after-

The romances.

<sup>1</sup> Duran, *Romancero de Romances Doctrinales, Amatorios, Festivos, &c.* 1829. The Moorish romances, with a few exceptions, and those of the Cid, are ascribed by this author to the latter part of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century. In the preface to a former publication, *Romances Moriscos*, this writer has said, "Casi todos los romances que publicamos en este libro pertenecen al siglo 16mo, y algunos pocos á principio del 17mo. Los autores son desconocidos, pero en otros han llegado, y merecido llegar á la posteridad." It seems manifest from in-

ternal evidence, without critical knowledge of the language, that those relating to the Cid are not of the middle ages, though some seem still inclined to give them a high antiquity. It is not sufficient to say, that the language has been modernized: the whole structure of these ballads is redolent of a low age; and, if the Spanish critics agree in this, I know not why foreigners should strive against them. [It is hardly, perhaps, necessary to warn the reader, that the celebrated long poem on the Cid is not reckoned among these romances.—1842.]

wards. Several poets belong to the age of that prince; and even that of Philip IV. was not destitute of men of merited reputation.<sup>1</sup> Among the best were two brothers, Lupercio and Bartholomew Argensola. These were chiefly distinguished in what I have called the third or Horatian manner of Spanish poetry, though they by no means confined themselves to any peculiar style. "Lupercio," says Bouterwek, "formed his style after Horace with no less assiduity than Luis de Leon; but he did not possess the soft enthusiasm of that pious poet, who, in the religious spirit of his poetry, is so totally unlike Horace. An understanding at once solid and ingenious, subject to no extravagant illusion, yet full of true poetic feeling, and an imagination more plastic than creative, impart a more perfect Horatian coloring to the odes, as well as to the canciones and sonnets, of Lupercio. He closely imitated Horace in his didactic satires, a style of composition in which no Spanish poet had preceded him. But he never succeeded in attaining the bold combination of ideas which characterizes the ode-style of Horace; and his conceptions have therefore seldom any thing like the Horatian energy. On the other hand, all his poems express no less precision of language than the models after which he formed his style. His odes, in particular, are characterized by a picturesque tone of expression which he seems to have imbibed from Virgil rather than from Horace. The extravagant metaphors by which some of Herrera's odes are deformed were uniformly avoided by Lupercio."<sup>2</sup> The genius of Bartholomew Argensola was very like that of his brother, nor are their writings easily distinguishable; but Bouterwek assigns, on the whole, a higher place to Bartholomew. Dieze inclines to the same judgment, and thinks the eulogy of Nicolas Antonio on these brothers, extravagant as it seems, not beyond their merits.

14. But another poet, Manuel Estevan de Villegas, whose poems, written in very early youth, entitled *Amatorios* or *Eroticas*, were published in 1620, has attained a still higher reputation, especially in other parts

<sup>1</sup> Antonio bestows unbounded praise on a poem of the epic class, the *Bernardo de Balbuena*, published at Madrid in 1624, though he complains that in his own age it lay hid in the corners of booksellers' shops. Balbuena, in his opinion, has left all Spanish poets far behind him. The subject of his poem is the very common

fable of Ronservalles. Dieze, while he denies this absolute pre-eminence of Balbuena, gives him a respectable place among the many epic writers of Spain. But I do not find him mentioned in Bouterwek; in fact, most of these poems are very scarce, and are treasures for the bibliomaniacs.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. of Spanish Literature, p. 386.



of Enope. Dieze calls him "one of the best lyric poets of Spain, excellent in the various styles he has employed, but above all in his odes and songs. His original poems are full of genius: his translations of Horace and Anacreon might often pass for original. Few surpass him in harmony of verse: he is the Spanish Anacreon, the poet of the Graces."<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, a more discriminating judge than Dieze, who is perhaps rather valuable for research than for taste, has observed, that "the graceful luxuriance of the poetry of Villegas has no parallel in modern literature; and, generally speaking, no modern writer has so well succeeded in blending the spirit of ancient poetry with the modern. But constantly to observe that correctness of ideas, which distinguished the classical compositions of antiquity, was by Villegas, as by most Spanish poets, considered too rigid a requisition, and an unnecessary restraint on genius. He accordingly sometimes degenerates into conceits and images, the monstrous absurdity of which is characteristic of the author's nation and age. For instance, in one of his odes, in which he entreats Lyda to suffer her tresses to flow, he says, that, 'agitated by Zephyr, her locks would occasion a thousand deaths, and subdue a thousand lives;' and then he adds, in a strain of extravagance surpassing that of the Marinists, 'that the sun himself would cease to give light, if he did not snatch beams from her radiant countenance to illumine the east.' But faults of this glaring kind are by no means frequent in the poetry of Villegas; and the fascinating grace with which he emulates his models operates with so powerful a charm, that the occasional occurrence of some little affectations, from which he could scarcely be expected entirely to abstain, is easily overlooked by the reader."<sup>2</sup>

15. Quevedo, who, having borne the surname of Villegas, has sometimes been confounded with the poet we have just named, is better known in Europe for his Quevedo. prose than his verse; but he is the author of numerous poems, both serious and comic or satirical. The latter are by much the more esteemed of the two. He wrote burlesque poetry with success, but it is frequently unintelligible except to natives. In satire he adopted the Juvenalian style.<sup>3</sup> A few more might perhaps be added, especially Espinel, a poet

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte der Spanischen Dichtkunst, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Bouterwek, l. 674.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 438.



of the classic school; Borja de Esquillace, once viceroy of Peru, who is called by Bouterwek the last representative of that style in Spain, but more worthy of praise for withstanding the bad taste of his contemporaries than for any vigor of genius; and Christopher de la Mena.<sup>1</sup> No Portuguese poetry about this time seems to be worthy of notice in European literature, though Manuel Faria y Sousa and a few more might attain a local reputation by sonnets and other amatory verse.

16. The original blemish of Spanish writing, both in prose and verse, had been an excess of effort to say every thing in an unusual manner, a deviation from the beaten paths of sentiment and language in a wider curve than good taste permits. Taste is the presiding faculty which regulates, in all works within her jurisdiction, the struggling powers of imagination, emotion, and reason. Each has its claim to mingle in the composition; each may sometimes be allowed in a great measure to predominate; and a phlegmatic application of what men call common sense in æsthetic criticism is almost as repugnant to its principles as a dereliction of all reason for the sake of fantastic absurdity. Taste also must determine, by an intuitive sense of right somewhat analogous to that which regulates the manners of polished life, to what extent the most simple, the most obvious, the most natural, and therefore, in a popular meaning, the most true, is to be modified by a studious introduction of the new, the striking, and the beautiful; so that neither what is insipid and trivial, nor yet what is forced and affected, may displease us. In Spain, as we have observed, the latter was always the prevailing fault. The public taste had been formed on bad models: on the Oriental poetry, metaphorical beyond all perceptible analogy; and on that of the Provençals, false in sentiment, false in conception, false in image and figure. The national character, proud, swelling, and ceremonious, conspired to give an inflated tone: it was also grave and sententious rather than lively or delicate, and therefore fond of a strained and ambitious style. These vices of writing are carried to excess in romances of chivalry, which became ridiculous in the eyes of sensible men, but were certainly very popular; they affect also, though in a different manner, much of the

Defects of  
taste in  
Spanish  
verse.

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, p. 488.

Spanish prose of the sixteenth century, and they belong to a great deal of the poetry of that age; though it must be owned that much appears wholly exempt from them, and written in a very pure and classical spirit. Cervantes strove by example and by precept to maintain good taste; and some of his contemporaries took the same line.<sup>1</sup> But they had to fight against the predominant turn of their nation, which soon gave the victory to one of the worst manners of writing that ever disgraced public favor.

17. Nothing can be more opposite to what is strictly called a classical style, or one formed upon the best models of Greece and Rome, than pedantry. This was, nevertheless, the weed that overspread the face of literature in those ages when Greece and Rome were the chief objects of veneration. Without an intimate discernment of their beauty, it was easy to copy allusions that were no longer intelligible, to counterfeit trains of thought that belonged to past times, to force reluctant idioms into modern form, as some are said to dress after a lady for whom nature has done more than for themselves. From the revival of letters downwards, this had been more or less observable in the learned men of Europe, and, after that class grew more extensive, in the current literature of modern languages. Pedantry, which consisted in unnecessary and perhaps unintelligible references to ancient learning, was afterwards combined with other artifices to obtain the same end, — far-fetched metaphors and extravagant conceits. The French versifiers of the latter end of the sixteenth century were eminent in both, as the works of Ronsard and Du Bartas attest. We might, indeed, take the Creation of Du Bartas more properly than the Euphuës of our English Lilly, which, though very affected and unpleasing, does hardly such violence to common speech and common sense, for the type of the style which, in the early part of the seventeenth century, became popular in several countries, but especially in Spain, through the misplaced labors of Gongora.

Pedantry  
and far-  
fetched  
allusions.

18. Luis de Gongora, a man of very considerable talents, and capable of writing well, as he has shown, in different styles of poetry, was unfortunately led by an ambitious desire of popularity to introduce one which should

Gongora.

<sup>1</sup> Cervantes, in his *Viaje del Parnaso*, style; but this, *Diessa saya*, is all ironical praises Gongora, and even imitates his *Goeth. der Dichtkunst*, p. 250.

render his name immortal, as it has done in a mode which he did not design. This was his *estilo culto*, as it was usually called, or highly polished phraseology, wherein every word seems to have been out of its natural place. "In fulfilment of this object," says Bouterwek, "he toiled for himself, with the most laborious assiduity, a style as uncommon as affected, and opposed to all the ordinary rules of the Spanish language, either in prose or verse. He particularly endeavored to introduce into his native tongue the intricate constructions of the Greek and Latin, though such an arrangement of words had never been attempted in Spanish composition. He consequently found it necessary to invent a particular system of punctuation, in order to render the sense of his verses intelligible. Not satisfied with this patchwork kind of phraseology, he affected to attach an extraordinary depth of meaning to each word, and to diffuse an air of superior dignity over his whole style. In Gongora's poetry, the most common words received a totally new signification; and, in order to impart perfection to his *estilo culto*, he summoned all his mythological learning to his aid."<sup>1</sup> "Gongora," says an English writer, "was the founder of a sect in literature. The style called in Castilian *cultismo* owes its origin to him. This affectation consists in using language so pedantic, metaphors so strained, and constructions so involved, that few readers have the knowledge requisite to understand the words; and still fewer, ingenuity to discover the allusion, or patience to unravel the sentences. These authors do not avail themselves of the invention of letters for the purpose of conveying but of concealing their ideas."<sup>2</sup>

19. The Gongorists formed a strong party in literature, and carried with them the public voice. If we were to believe some writers of the seventeenth century, he was the greatest poet of Spain.<sup>3</sup> The age of Cervantes was over, nor was there vitality enough in the criticism of the reign of Philip IV. to resist the contagion. Two sects soon appeared among these *cultoristas*:

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, p. 484.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Holland's *Lope de Vega*, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Buze, p. 250. Nicolas Antonio, to the disgrace of his judgment, maintains this with the most extravagant eulogy on Gongora; and Huet copies him: but the next age unhesitatingly reversed the sen-

tence. The Portuguese have laid claim to the *estilo culto* as their property; and one of their writers who practices it — Manuel de Faria y Sousa — gives Don Sebastian the credit of having been the first who wrote it in prose.

one who retained that name, and, like their master, affected a certain precision of style; another, called *conceptistes*, which went still greater lengths in extravagance, desirous only, it might seem, of expressing absurd ideas in unnatural language.<sup>1</sup> The prevalence of such a disease, for no other analogy can so fitly be used, would seem to have been a bad presage for Spain; but, in fact, like other diseases, it did but make the tour of Europe, and rage worse in some countries than in others. It had spent itself in France, when it was at its height in Italy and England. I do not perceive the close connection of the *estilo culto* of Gongora with that of Marini, whom both Bouterwek and Lord Holland suppose to have formed his own taste on the Spanish school. It seems rather too severe an imputation on that most ingenious and fertile poet, who, as has already been observed, has no fitter parallel than Ovid. The strained metaphors of the Adone are easily collected by critics, and seem extravagant in juxtaposition; but they recur only at intervals: while those of Gongora are studiously forced into every line, and are, besides, incomparably more refined and obscure. His style, indeed, seems to be like that of Lycophron, without the excuse of that prophetic mystery which breathes a certain awfulness over the symbolic language of the Cassandra. Nor am I convinced that our own metaphysical poetry in the reigns of James and Charles had much to do with either Marini or Gongora, except as it bore marks of the same vice, — a restless ambition to excite wonder by overstepping the boundaries of nature.

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### SECTION III.

Malherbe — Regular — Other French Poets.

20. MALHERBE, a very few of whose poems belong to the last century, but the greater part to the first twenty years of the present, gave a polish and a grace to the lyric poetry of France, which has rendered his name celebrated in her criticism. The public taste of that country is

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, p. 438.

(or I should rather say, used to be) more intolerant of defects in poetry, than rigorous in its demands of excellence. Malherbe, therefore, who substituted a regular and accurate versification, a style pure and generally free from pedantic or colloquial phrases, and a sustained tone of what were reckoned elevated thoughts, for the more unequal strains of the sixteenth century, acquired a reputation which may lead some of his readers to disappointment. And this is likely to be increased by a very few lines of great beauty which are known by heart. These stand too much alone in his poems. In general, we find in them neither imagery nor sentiment that yield us delight. He is less mythological, less affected, less given to frigid hyperboles, than his predecessors, but far too much so for any one accustomed to real poetry. In the panegyric odes, Malherbe displays some felicity and skill: the poet of kings and courtiers, he, wisely perhaps, wrote, even when he could have written better, what kings and courtiers would understand and reward. Polished and elegant, his lines seldom pass the conventional tone of poetry; and, while he is never original, he is rarely impressive. Malherbe may stand in relation to Horace as Chiabrera does to Pindar: the analogy is not very close; but he is far from deficient in that calm philosophy which forms the charm of the Roman poet, and we are willing to believe that he sacrificed his time reluctantly to the praises of the great. It may be suspected that he wrote verses for others; a practice not unusual, I believe, among these courtly rhymers: at least his *Alcandre* seems to be Henry IV., *Chrysanthe* or *Oranthe* the Princess of Condé. He seems himself in some passages to have affected gallantry towards Mary of Medicis, which at that time was not reckoned an impertinence.

21. Bouterwek has criticised Malherbe with some justice, but with greater severity.<sup>1</sup> He deems him no poet which, in a certain sense, is surely true. But we narrow our definition of poetry too much, when we exclude from it the versification of good sense and select diction. This may probably be ascribed to Malherbe; though Bouhours, an acute and somewhat rigid critic, has pointed out some passages which he deems nonsensical. Another writer of the same age, Rapin, whose own taste was not very glowing, observes that there is much prose in Malherbe; and that,

Criticisms  
upon his  
poetry.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. v. p. 298



well as he merits to be called correct, he is a little too desirous of appearing so, and often becomes frigid.<sup>1</sup> Boileau has extolled him, perhaps, somewhat too highly, and La Harpe is inclined to the same side; but, in the modern state of French criticism, the danger is that the Malherbes will be too much depreciated.

22. The satires of Regnier have been highly praised by Boileau; a competent judge, no doubt, in such mat-  
 ters. Some have preferred Regnier even to himself, Satires of Regnier.  
 and found in this old Juvenal of France a certain stamp of satirical genius which the more polished critic wanted.<sup>2</sup> These satires are unlike all other French poetry of the age of Henry IV.: the tone is vehement, somewhat rugged and coarse, and reminds us a little of his contemporaries Hall and Donne, whom, however, he will generally and justly be thought much to excel. Some of his satires are borrowed from Ovid or from the Italians.<sup>3</sup> They have been called gross and licentious; but this only applies to one, the rest are unexceptionable. Regnier, who had probably some quarrel with Malherbe, speaks with contempt of his elaborate polish. But the taste of France, and especially of that highly cultivated nobility who formed the court of Louis XIII. and his son, no longer endured the rude, though sometimes animated, versification of the older poets. Next to Malherbe in reputation stood Racan and Maynard, both more or less of his school. Of these it was said by their master, that Racan;  
 Racan wanted the diligence of Maynard, as Maynard Maynard.  
 did the spirit of Racan; and that a good poet might be made out of the two.<sup>4</sup> A foreigner will in general prefer the former, who seems to have possessed more imagination and sensibility, and a keener relish for rural beauty. Maynard's verses, according to Pelisson, have an ease and elegance that few can imitate, which proceeds from his natural and simple construction.<sup>5</sup> He had more success in epigram than in his sonnets, which Boileau has treated with little respect. Nor

<sup>1</sup> *Réflexions sur la Poétique*, p. 147.—

"Malherbe a été le premier qui nous a remis dans le bon chemin, joignant la pureté au grand style; mais comme il commençait cette manière, il ne put la porter jusqu'à sa perfection, il y a bien de la prose dans ses vers." In another place he says, "Malherbe est exact et correct; mais il ne hazardo rien, et par l'envie qu'il a

d'être trop sage, il est souvent froid."—p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> Bouterwek, p. 246; La Harpe; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>3</sup> Nieéron, xi. 397.

<sup>4</sup> Pelisson, *Hist. de l'Académie*, t. 290; Baillet, *Jugemens des Savans* (Poètes), n. 1510; La Harpe *Cours de Littérature*; Bouterwek, v. 260.

<sup>5</sup> *Idea*

does he speak better of Malleville, who chose no other species of verse, but seldom produced a finished piece, though not deficient in spirit and delicacy. Viaud, more frequently known by the name of Théophile, a writer of no great elevation of style, is not destitute of imagination. Such at least is the opinion of Rapin and Bouterwek.<sup>1</sup>

23. The poems of Gombauld were, in general, published before the middle of the century; his epigrams, which are most esteemed, in 1657. These are often lively and neat. But a style of playfulness and gayety had been introduced by Voiture. French poetry under Ronsard and his

school, and even that of Malherbe, had lost the lively tone of Marot, and become serious almost to severity. Voiture, with an apparent ease and grace, though without the natural air of the old writers, made it once more amusing. In reality, the style of Voiture is artificial and elaborate; but, like his imitator Prior among us, he has the skill to disguise this from the reader. He must be admitted to have had, in verse as well as prose, a considerable influence over the taste of France. He wrote to please women, and women are grateful when they are pleased. Sarrazin, says his biographer, though less celebrated than Voiture, deserves

perhaps to be rated above him: with equal ingenuity, he is far more natural.<sup>2</sup> The German historian of French literature has spoken less respectfully of Sarrazin, whose verses are the most insipid rhymed prose, such as he, not unhappily, calls *toilet-poetry*.<sup>3</sup> This is a style which finds little mercy on the right bank of the Rhine; but the French are better judges of the merit of Sarrazin.

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, 252. Rapin says, "Théophile a l'imagination grande et le sens petit. Il a des hardieses heureuses à force de se permettre tout."—*Reflexions sur la Poétique*, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Biogr. Univ.; Ballez, n. 1532.

<sup>3</sup> Bouterwek, v. 259. Specimens of all these poets will be found in the collection of Anguis, vol. vi.; and I must own that, with the exceptions of Malherbe, Racine, and one or two more, my own acquaintance with them extends little farther.

## SECTION IV.

Rise of Poetry in Germany—Opitz and his Followers—Dutch Poets.

24. THE German language had never been more despised by the learned and the noble than at the beginning of the seventeenth century, which seems to be the lowest point in its native literature. The capacity was not wanting; many wrote Latin verse with success; the collection made by Gruter is abundant in these cultivators of a foreign tongue, several of whom belong to the close of the preceding age. But, among these, it is said that whoever essayed to write their own language did but fail; and the instances adduced are very few. The upper ranks began about this time to speak French in common society; the burghers, as usual, strove to imitate them; and, what was far worse, it became the mode to intermingle French words with German, not singly and sparingly, as has happened in other times and countries, but in a jargon affectedly piebald and macaronic. Some hope might have been founded on the literary academies, which, in emulation of Italy, sprung up in this period. The oldest is The Fruitful Society (*Die Fruchthringende Gesellschaft*), known also as the Order of Palms, established at Weimar in 1617.<sup>1</sup> Five princes enrolled their names at the beginning. It held forth the laudable purpose of purifying and correcting the mother tongue and of promoting its literature, after the manner of the Italian academies. But it is not unusual for literary associations to promise much, and fail of performance: one man is more easily found to lay down a good plan, than many to co-operate in its execution. Probably this was merely the scheme of some more gifted individual, perhaps Werder, who translated Ariosto and Tasso;<sup>2</sup> for little good was effected by the institution. Nor did several others, which at different times in the seventeenth century arose over Germany, deserve more praise. They copied the academies of Italy in their quaint names and titles, in their by-laws, their petty ceremonies and symbolic distinctions, to which, as we always find in

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, i. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Id., i. 29.

these self-elected societies, they attached vast importance, and thought themselves superior to the world by doing nothing for it. "They are gone," exclaims Bonterwek, "and have left no clear vestige of their existence." Such had been the Meister-singers before them; and little else, in effect, were the academies, in a more genial soil, of their own age. Notwithstanding this, though I am compelled to follow the historian of German literature, it must strike us that these societies seem to manifest a public esteem for something intellectual, which they knew not precisely how to attain; and it is to be observed, that several of the best poets in the seventeenth century belonged to them.

25. A very small number of poets, such as Meckerlin and Opitz. Spee, in the early part of the seventeenth century, though with many faults in point of taste, have been commemorated by the modern historians of literature. But they were wholly eclipsed by one whom Germany regards as the founder of her poetic literature, Martin Opitz, a native of Silesia, honored with a laurel crown by the emperor, in 1628, and raised to offices of distinction and trust in several courts. The national admiration of Opitz seems to have been almost enthusiastic; yet Opitz was far from being the poet of enthusiasm. Had he been such, his age might not have understood him. His taste was French and Dutch; two countries of which the poetry was pure and correct, but not imaginative. No great elevation, no energy of genius, will be found in this German Heinsius or Malherbe. Opitz displayed, however, another kind of excellence. He wrote the language with a purity of idiom, in which Luther alone, whom he chose as his model, was superior: he gave more strength to the versification, and paid a regard to the collocation of syllables according to their quantity, or length of time required for articulation, which the earlier poets had neglected. He is, therefore, reckoned the inventor of a rich and harmonious rhythm; and he also rendered the Alexandrine verse much more common than before.<sup>1</sup> His sense is good; he writes as one conversant with the ancients, and with mankind: if he is too didactic and learned for a poet in the higher import of the word; if his taste appears fettered by the models

<sup>1</sup> Bonterwek (p. 94) thinks this no advantage: a rhymed prose in Alexandrines overspread the German literature of the

seventeenth and first part of the eighteenth century.



he took for imitation; if he even retarded, of which we can hardly be sure, the development of a more genuine nationality in German literature,—he must still be allowed, in a favorable sense, to have made an epoch in its history.<sup>1</sup>

26. Opitz is reckoned the founder of what was called the first Silesian school, rather so denominated from him <sup>his followers</sup> than as determining the birthplace of its poets.

They were chiefly lyric, but more in the line of songs and short effusions in trochaic metre than of the regular ode, and sometimes display much spirit and feeling. The German song always seems to bear a resemblance to the English: the identity of metre and rhythm conspires with what is more essential, a certain analogy of sentiment. Many, however, of Opitz's followers, like himself, took Holland for their Parnassus, and translated their songs from Dutch. Fleming was distinguished by a genuine feeling for lyric poetry: he made Opitz his model, but, had he not died young, would probably have gone beyond him; being endowed by nature with a more poetical genius. Gryph or Gryphius, who belonged to the Fruitful Society, and bore in that the surname of the Immortal, with faults that strike the reader in every page, is also superior in fancy and warmth to Opitz. But Gryph is better known in German literature by his tragedies. The hymns of the Lutheran Church are by no means the lowest form of German poetry. They have been the work of every age since the Reformation; but Daeh and Gerhard, who, especially the latter, excelled in these devotional songs, lived about the middle of the seventeenth century. The shade of Luther seemed to protect the church from the profanation of bad taste; or, as we should rather say, it was the intense

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, i. 89-119, has given an elaborate critique of the poetry of Opitz: "He is the father, not of German poetry, but of the modern German language of poetry, *der neueren deutschen Dichtersprache*,"—p. 96. The fame of Opitz spread beyond his country, little as his language was familiar. "Non perit Germania," *Stettius* writes to him, in 1631. "Opiti doctrinæ, quæ te habet incomplexum testem, quid lingua Germanica, quid ingenia Germanici valeant."—*Epist.* 272. Afterwards, in 1638, thanking him for the present of his translation of the *Psalms*: "Optus erat rex poeta interpretæ Germanorum pretarius rex; nihil enim uti blasphemæ illi; ita sentia te primum Germanicæ poetæ formam datam et lubi-

tum quo cum aliis gentibus poetæ contendere."—*Ep.* 369. Baillet observes, that Opitz passes for the best of German poets, and the first who gave rules to that poetry, and raised it to the state it had since reached; so that he is rather to be accounted its father than its improver. *Jugemens des Savans* (Poëtes), n. 1436. But reputation is transitory. Though ten editions of the poems of Opitz were published within the seventeenth century,—which Bouterwek thinks much for Germany at that time, though it would not be so much in some countries,—scarcely any one, except the lovers of old literature, now asks for these obsolete productions. p. 90.



theopathy of the German nation, and the simple majesty of their ecclesiastical music.<sup>1</sup>

27. It has been the misfortune of the Dutch, a great people, Dutch  
poetry. a people fertile of men of various ability and erudition, a people of scholars, of theologians and philosophers, of mathematicians, of historians, of painters, and, we may add, of poets, that these last have been the mere violets of the shade, and have peculiarly suffered by the narrow limits within which their language has been spoken or known. The Flemish dialect of the Southern Netherlands might have contributed to make up something like a national literature, extensive enough to be respected in Europe, if those provinces, which now affect the name of Belgium, had been equally fertile of talents with their neighbors.

28. The golden age of Dutch literature is this first part of the seventeenth century. Their chief poets are Spiegel. Spiegel, Hooft, Cats, and Vondel. The first, who has been styled the Dutch Eurius, died in 1612: his principal poem, of an ethical kind, is posthumous, but may probably have been written towards the close of the preceding century. "The style is vigorous and concise; it is rich in imagery and powerfully expressed, but is deficient in elegance and perspicuity."<sup>2</sup> Spiegel had rendered much service to his native tongue, and was a member of a literary academy which published a Dutch grammar in 1584. Koornhert and Donsa, with others known to fame, were his colleagues; and be it remembered, to the honor of Holland, that in Germany or England, or even in France, there was as yet no institution of this kind. But as Holland at the end of the sixteenth century, and for many years afterwards, was pre-eminently the literary country of Europe, it is not surprising that some endeavors were made, though unsuccessfully as to European renown, to cultivate the native language. This language is also more soft, though less sonorous, than the German.

29. Spiegel was followed by a more celebrated poet, Peter Hooft;  
Cats;  
Vondel. Hooft, who gave sweetness and harmony to Dutch verse. "The great creative power of poetry," it has been said, "he did not possess; but his language is correct, his style agreeable, and he did much to introduce a better epoch"<sup>3</sup> His amatory and Anacreontic lines have never been excelled in the language; and Hooft is also distin-

<sup>1</sup> *Bouterwek*, x. 218; *Kieckhorn*, iv. 838

<sup>2</sup> *Biogr. Univ.*

<sup>3</sup> 14.

guished both as a dramatist and an historian. He has been called the Tacitus of Holland. But here again his praises must by the generality be taken upon trust. Cats is a poet of a different class: ease, abundance, simplicity, clearness, and purity, are the qualities of his style; his imagination is gay, his morality popular and useful. No one was more read than Father Cats, as the people call him; but he is often trifling and monotonous. Cats, though he wrote for the multitude, whose descendants still almost know his poems by heart, was a man whom the republic held in high esteem: twice ambassador in England, he died great pensionary of Holland, in 1651. Vondel, a native of Cologne, but the glory, as he is deemed, of Dutch poetry, was best known as a tragedian. In his tragedies, the lyric part, the choruses which he retained after the ancient model, have been called the sublimest of odes. But some have spoken less highly of Vondel.<sup>1</sup>

30. Denmark had no literature in the native language, except a collection of old ballads, full of Scandinavian legends, till the present period; and in this it does not appear that she had more than one poet, a Norwegian bishop, named Arrebo. Nothing, I believe, was written in Swedish. Selavonian, that is, Polish and Russian, poets there were; but we know so little of those languages, that they cannot enter, at least during so distant a period, into the history of European literature.

Danish  
poetry.

#### SECT. V.—ON ENGLISH POETRY.

Imitators of Spenser — The Fletchers — Philosophical Poets — Denham — Donne — Cowley — Historical and Narrative Poets — Shakspeare's Sonnets — Lyric Poets — Milton's Lycidas, and other Poems.

31. THE English poets of these fifty years are very numerous; and, though the greater part are not familiar to the general reader, they form a favorite study of those who cultivate our poetry, and are sought by all collectors of scarce and interesting literature. Many of them have, within half a century, been reprinted

English  
Poets un-  
known in  
this age.

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Quart. Rev., vol. iv. p. 49. I am indebted to Elphinstone, vol. iv. part 2, for this short account of the Dutch poets, and to the Biographie Universelle.

separately; and many more, in the useful and copious collections of Anderson, Chalmers, and other editors. Extracts have also been made by Headley, Ellis, Campbell, and Southey. It will be convenient to arrange them rather according to the schools to which they belonged, than in mere order of chronology.

32. Whatever were the misfortunes of Spenser's life, what-  
Phineas  
Fletcher. ever neglect he might have experienced at the hands of a statesman grown old in cares which render a man insensible to song, his spirit might be consoled by the prodigious reputation of the Faery Queen. He was placed at once by his country above all the great Italian names, and next to Virgil among the ancients: it was a natural consequence that some should imitate what they so deeply revered. An ardent admiration for Spenser inspired the genius of two young brothers, Phineas and Giles Fletcher. The first, very soon after the queen's death, as some allusions to Lord Essex seemed to denote, composed, though he did not so soon publish, a poem entitled *The Purple Island*. By this strange name he expressed a subject more strange: it is a minute and elaborate account of the body and mind of man. Through five cantos the reader is regaled with nothing but allegorical anatomy, in the details of which Phineas seems tolerably skilled, evincing a great deal of ingenuity in diversifying his metaphors, and in presenting the delineation of his imaginary island with as much justice as possible to the allegory without obtruding it on the reader's view. In the sixth canto, he rises to the intellectual and moral faculties of the soul, which occupy the rest of the poem. From its nature, it is insupportably wearisome; yet his language is often very poetical, his versification harmonious, his invention fertile. But that perpetual monotony of allegorical persons, which sometimes displeases us even in Spenser, is seldom relieved in Fletcher; the understanding revolts at the confused crowd of inconceivable beings in a philosophical poem; and the justness of analogy, which had given us some pleasure in the anatomical cantos, is lost in tedious descriptions of all possible moral qualities, each of them personified, which can never co-exist in the *Purple Island* of one individual.

33. Giles Fletcher, brother of Phineas, in *Christ's Victory and Triumph*, though his subject has not all the unity that might be desired, had a manifest superiority in its choice.

Each uses a stanza of his own: Phineas, one of seven lines - Giles, one of eight. This poem was published in 1610. Each brother alludes to the work of the other, which must be owing to the alterations made by Phineas in his *Purple Island*, written probably the first, but not published, I believe, till 1633. Giles seems to have more vigor than his elder brother, but less sweetness, less smoothness, and more affectation in his style. This, indeed, is deformed by words neither English nor Latin, but simply barbarous; such as *clamping*, *emblazon*, *deprostrate*, *purpured*, *glitterand*, and many others. They both bear much resemblance to Spenser. Giles sometimes ventures to cope with him, even in celebrated passages, such as the description of the Cave of Despair.<sup>1</sup> And he has had the honor, in turn, of being followed by Milton, especially in the first meeting of our Saviour with Satan, in the *Paradise Regained*. Both of these brothers are deserving of much praise: they were endowed with minds eminently poetical, and not inferior in imagination to any of their contemporaries. But an injudicious taste, and an excessive fondness for a style which the public was rapidly abandoning, — that of allegorical personification, — prevented their powers from being effectively displayed.

34. Notwithstanding the popularity of Spenser, and the general pride in his name, that allegorical and imaginative school of poetry, of which he was the greatest ornament, did not by any means exclude a very different kind. The English, or such as by their education gave the tone in literature, had become, in the latter years of the queen, and still more under her successor, a deeply thinking, a learned, a philosophical people. A sententious reasoning, grave, subtle and condensed, or the novel and remote analogies of wit, gained praise from many whom the creations of an excursive fancy could not attract. Hence much of the poetry of James's reign is distinguished from that of Elizabeth, except perhaps her last years, by partaking of the general character of the age; deficient in simplicity, grace, and feeling, often obscure and pedantic, but impressing us with a respect for the man, where we do not recognize the poet. From this condition of public taste arose two schools of poetry, different in character, if not unequal in merit, but both appealing to the reasoning more than to the imaginative faculty as their judge.

<sup>1</sup> Christ's Vict. and Triumph, ll. 22.



35. The first of these may own as its founder Sir John Davies, whose poem on the Immortality of the Soul, published in 1599, has had its due honor in our last volume. Davies is eminent for perspicuity; but this cannot be said for another philosophical poet, Sir Fulke Greville, afterwards Lord Brooke, the bosom friend of Sir Philip Sidney, and once the patron of Jordano Bruno. The titles of Lord Brooke's poems, *A Treatise of Human Learning*, *A Treatise of Monarchy*, *A Treatise of Religion*, *An Inquisition upon Fame and Honor*, lead us to anticipate more of sense than fancy. In this we are not deceived: his mind was pregnant with deep reflection upon multifarious learning; but he struggles to give utterance to thoughts which he had not fully endowed with words, and amidst the shackles of rhyme and metre, which he had not learned to manage. Hence of all our poets he may be reckoned the most obscure; in aiming at condensation, he becomes elliptical beyond the bounds of the language; and his rhymes, being forced for the sake of sound, leave all meaning behind. Lord Brooke's poetry is chiefly worth notice as an indication of that thinking spirit upon political science which was to produce the riper speculations of Hobbes and Harrington and Locke.

36. This argumentative school of verse was so much in unison with the character of that generation, that Daniel, a poet of a very different temper, adopted it in his panegyric addressed to James soon after his accession, and in some other poems. It had an influence upon others who trod generally in a different track, as is especially perceived in Giles Fletcher. The Cooper's Hill of Sir John Denham, published in 1643, belongs, in a considerable degree, to this reasoning class of poems. It is also descriptive; but the description is made to slide into philosophy. The plan is original, as far as our poetry is concerned; and I do not recollect any exception in other languages. Placing himself upon an eminence not distant from Windsor, he takes a survey of the scene; he finds the tower of St. Paul's on its farthest horizon, the Castle much nearer, and the Thames at his feet. These, with the ruins of an abbey, supply, in turn, materials for a reflecting rather than imaginative mind, and, with a stag-hunt, which he has very well described, fill up the canvas of a poem of no great length, but once of no trifling reputation.

Denham's  
Cooper's  
Hill.



37. The epithet, *majestic* Denham, conferred by Pope, conveys rather too much; but Cooper's Hill is no ordinary poem. It is nearly the first instance of vigorous and rhythmical couplets; for Denham is incomparably less feeble than Browne, and less prosaic than Beaumont. Close in thought, and nervous in language like Davies, he is less hard and less monotonous; his cadences are animated and various, perhaps a little beyond the regularity that metre demands; they have been the guide to the finer ear of Dryden. Those who cannot endure the philosophic poetry must ever be dissatisfied with Cooper's Hill; no personification, no ardent words, few metaphors beyond the common use of speech, nothing that warms or melts or fascinates the heart. It is rare to find lines of eminent beauty in Denham; and equally so to be struck by any one as feeble or low. His language is always well chosen and perspicuous, free from those strange turns of expression, frequent in our older poets, where the reader is apt to suspect some error of the press, so irreconcilable do they seem with grammar or meaning. The expletive *do*, which the best of his predecessors use freely, seldom occurs in Denham; and he has in other respects brushed away the rust of languid and ineffective redundancies which have obstructed the popularity of men with more native genius than himself.<sup>1</sup>

38. Another class of poets in the reigns of James and his son were those whom Johnson has called the metaphysical; a name rather more applicable, in the ordinary use of the word, to Davies and Brooke. Poets called metaphysical. These were such as labored after conceits, or novel turns of thought, usually false, and resting upon some equivocation of language, or exceedingly remote analogy. This style Johnson supposes to have been derived from Marini. But Donne, its founder, as Johnson imagines, in England, wrote

<sup>1</sup> The comparison by Denham between the Thames and his own poetry was once celebrated:—

"Oh, could I flow like thee, and make thy stream  
My bright example, as it is my theme!  
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle,  
yet not dull;  
Strong without rage; without o'erflow-  
ing, full."

Johnson, while he highly extols these lines, truly observes, that "most of the words thus artfully opposed are to be understood simply on one side of the com-

parison, and metaphorically on the other; and, if there be any language which does not express intellectual operations by material images, into that language they cannot be translated." Perhaps these metaphors are so naturally applied to style, that no language of a cultivated people is without them. But the ground of comparison is, in fact, that the lines contain nothing but wit, and that wit which turned on a play of words. They are rather ingenious in this respect, and somewhat harmonious, which is probably the secret of their popularity; but, as poetry, they deserve no great praise.

before Marini. It is, in fact, as we have lately observed, the style which, though Marini has earned the discreditable reputation of perverting the taste of his country by it, had been gaining ground through the latter half of the sixteenth century. It was, in a more comprehensive view, one modification of that vitiated taste which sacrificed all ease and naturalness of writing and speaking for the sake of display. The mythological erudition and Grecisms of Ronsard's school, the euphuism of that of Lilly, the *estilo culto* of Gongora, even the pedantic quotations of Burton and many similar writers, both in England and on the Continent, sprang, like the *conceits* of the Italians and of their English imitators, from the same source, a dread of being overlooked if they paced on like their neighbors. And when a few writers had set the example of successful faults, a bad style, where no sound principles of criticism had been established, readily gaining ground, it became necessary that those who had not vigor enough to rise above the fashion should seek to fall in with it. Nothing is more injurious to the cultivation of verse than the trick of desiring, for praise or profit, to attract those by poetry whom nature has left destitute of every quality which genuine poetry can attract. The best, and perhaps the only secure, basis for *public* taste, for an æsthetic appreciation of beauty, in a court, a college, a city, is so general a diffusion of classical knowledge, as by rendering the finest models familiar, and by giving them a sort of authority, will discountenance and check at the outset the vicious novelties which always exert some influence over uneducated minds. But this was not yet the case in England. Milton was perhaps the first writer who eminently possessed a genuine discernment and feeling of antiquity; though it may be perceived in Spenser, and also in a very few who wrote in prose.

39. Donne is generally esteemed the earliest, as Cowley was afterwards the most conspicuous, model of this manner. Many instances of it, however, occur in the lighter poetry of the queen's reign. Donne is the most inharmonious of our versifiers, if he can be said to have deserved such a name by lines too rugged to seem metre. Of his earlier poems, many are very licentious; the later are chiefly devout. Few are good for much; the conceits have not even the merit of being intelligible: it would perhaps be difficult to select three passages that we should care to read again.

40. The second of these poets was Crashaw, a man of some imagination and great piety, but whose softness of heart, united with feeble judgment, led him to admire and imitate whatever was most extravagant in the mystic writings of Saint Teresa. He was, more than Donne, a follower of Marini; one of whose poems, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, he translated with success. It is difficult, in general, to find any thing in Crashaw that bad taste has not deformed. His poems were first published in 1646.

41. In the next year, 1647, Cowley's *Mistress* appeared; the most celebrated performance of the mis-called metaphysical poets. It is a series of short amatory poems, in the Italian style of the age, full of analogies that have no semblance of truth, except from the double sense of words and thoughts that unite the coldness of subtilty with the hyperbolical extravagance of counterfeited passion. A few Anacreontic poems, and some other light pieces of Cowley, have a spirit and raciness very unlike these frigid conceits; and, in the ode on the death of his friend Mr. Harvey, he gave some proofs of real sensibility and poetic grace. The Pindaric odes of Cowley were not published within this period. But it is not worth while to defer mention of them. They contain, like all his poetry, from time to time, very beautiful lines; but the faults are still of the same kind: his sensibility and good sense, nor has any poet more, are choked by false taste; and it would be difficult to fix on any one poem in which the beauties are more frequent than the blemishes. Johnson has selected the elegy on Crashaw as the finest of Cowley's works. It begins with a very beautiful couplet, but I confess that little else seems, to my taste, of much value. *The Complaint*, probably better known than any other poem, appears to me the best in itself. His disappointed hopes give a not unpleasing melancholy to several passages. But his Latin ode in a similar strain is much more perfect. Cowley, perhaps, upon the whole, has had a reputation more above his deserts than any English poet; yet it is very easy to perceive that some, who wrote better than he, did not possess so fine a genius. Johnson has written the life of Cowley with peculiar care; and, as his summary of the poet's character is more favorable than my own, it may be candid to insert it in this place, as at least very discriminating, elaborate, and well expressed.

42. "It may be affirmed without any encomiastic fervor, that he brought to his poetic labors a mind replete with learning, and that his pages are embellished with all the ornaments which books could supply; that he was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode, and the gayety of the less;<sup>1</sup> that he was equally qualified for sprightly sallies and for lofty flights; that he was among those who freed translation from servility, and, instead of following his author at a distance, walked by his side; and that, if he left versification yet improvable, he left likewise, from time to time, such specimens of excellence as enabled succeeding poets to improve it."

Johnson's  
character  
of him

43. The poets of historical or fabulous narrative belong to another class. Of these the earliest is Daniel, whose minor poems fall partly within the sixteenth century. His history of the Civil Wars between York and Lancaster, a poem in eight books, was published in 1604. Faithfully adhering to truth, which he does not suffer so much as an ornamental episode to interrupt, and equally studious to avoid the bolder figures of poetry, it is not surprising that Daniel should be little read. It is, indeed, certain that much Italian and Spanish poetry, even by those whose name has once stood rather high, depends chiefly upon merits which he abundantly possesses, — a smoothness of rhythm, and a lucid narration in simple language. But that which from the natural delight in sweet sound is enough to content the ear in the Southern tongues, will always seem bald and tame in our less harmonious verse. It is the chief praise of Daniel, and must have contributed to what popularity he enjoyed in his own age, that his English is eminently pure, free from affectation of archaism and from pedantic innovation, with very little that is now obsolete. Both in prose and in poetry, he is, as to language, among the best writers of his time, and wanted but a greater confidence in his own power, or, to speak less indulgently, a greater share of it, to sustain his correct taste, calm sense, and moral feeling.

Narrative  
poets:  
Daniel.

44. Next to Daniel in time, and much above him in reach of mind, we place Michael Drayton, whose *Barons' Polyolbion*. Wars have been mentioned under the preceding period, but whose more famous work was published partly in

<sup>1</sup> Was not Milton's Ode on the Nativity written as early as any of Cowley's? And would Johnson have thought Cowley superior in gayety to Sir John Suckling?

1613, and partly in 1622. Drayton's *Polyolbion* is a poem of about 39,000 lines in length, written in Alexandrine couplets; a measure, from its monotony, and perhaps from its frequency in doggerel ballads, not at all pleasing to the ear. It contains a topographical description of England, illustrated with a prodigality of historical and legendary erudition. Such a poem is essentially designed to instruct, and speaks to the understanding more than to the fancy. The powers displayed in it are, however, of a high cast. It has generally been a difficulty with poets to deal with a necessary enumeration of proper names. The catalogue of ships is not the most delightful part of the *Iliad*; and Ariosto never encountered such a roll of persons or places without sinking into the tamest insipidity. Virgil is splendidly beautiful upon similar occasions; but his decorative elegance could not be preserved, nor would continue to please, in a poem that kept up, through a great length, the effort to furnish instruction. The style of Drayton is sustained, with extraordinary ability, on an equable line, from which he seldom much deviates, neither brilliant nor prosaic: few or no passages could be marked as impressive, but few are languid or mean. The language is clear, strong, various, and sufficiently figurative; the stories and fictions interspersed, as well as the general spirit and liveliness, relieve the heaviness incident to topographical description. There is probably no poem of this kind, in any other language, comparable together in extent and excellence to the *Polyolbion*; nor can any one read a portion of it without admiration for its learned and highly gifted author. Yet perhaps no English poem, known as well by name, is so little known beyond its name; for, while its immense length deters the common reader, it affords, as has just been hinted, no great harvest for selection, and would be judged very unfairly by partial extracts. It must be owned also, that geography and antiquities may, in modern times, be taught better in prose than in verse; yet whoever consults the *Polyolbion* for such objects will probably be repaid by petty knowledge which he may not have found anywhere else.

45. Among these historical poets I should incline to class William Browne, author of a poem with the quaint title of *Britannia's Pastorals*; though his story, one of little interest, seems to have been invented by himself. Browne, indeed, is of no distinct school among the

Browne's  
*Britannia's*  
*Pastorals.*



writers of that age: he seems to recognize Spenser as his master; but his own manner is more to be traced among later than earlier poets. He was a native of Devonshire; and his principal poem, above mentioned, relating partly to the local scenery of that county, was printed in 1613. Browne is truly a poet, full of imagination, grace, and sweetness, though not very nervous or rapid. I know not why Headley, favorable enough for the most part to this generation of the sons of song, has spoken of Browne with unfair contempt. Justice, however, has been done to him by later critics.<sup>1</sup> But I have not observed that they take notice of what is remarkable in the history of our poetical literature, that Browne is an early model of ease and variety in the regular couplet. Many passages in his unequal poem are hardly excelled, in this respect, by the fables of Dryden. It is manifest that Milton was well acquainted with the writings of Browne.

46. The commendation of improving the rhythm of the couplet is due also to Sir John Beaumont, author of a short poem on the battle of Bosworth Field. It was not written, however, so early as the Britannia's Pastorals of Browne. In other respects, it has no pretensions to a high rank. But it may be added, that a poem of Drummond, on the visit of James I. to Scotland in 1617, is perfectly harmonious; and, what is very remarkable in that age, he concludes the verse at every couplet with the regularity of Pope.

47. Far unlike the poem of Browne was Gondibert, published by Sir William Davenant in 1650. It may probably have been reckoned by himself an epic; but in that age the practice of Spain and Italy had effaced the distinction between the regular epic and the heroic romance. Gondibert belongs rather to the latter class by the entire want of truth in the story, though the scene is laid at the court of the Lombard kings; by the deficiency of unity in the action; by the intricacy of the events; and by the resources of the fable, which are sometimes too much in the style of comic fiction. It is so imperfect, only two books and part of the

<sup>1</sup> "Browne," Mr. Southey says, "is a poet who produced no slight effect upon his contemporaries. George Wither, in his happiest pieces, has learned the manner of his friend; and Milton may be traced to him. And, in our days, his peculiarities have been caught, and his beauties imitated by men who will themselves find

admirers and imitators hereafter." "His poetry," Mr. Campbell, a far less indulgent judge of the older bard, observes, "is not without beauty; but it is the beauty of mere landscape and allegory, without the manners and passions that constitute human interest." — *Spectator of English Poetry*, iv. 323.

third being completed, that we can hardly judge of the termination it was to receive. Each book, however, after the manner of Spenser, is divided into several cantos. It contains about 6,000 lines. The metre is the four-lined stanza of alternate rhymes; one capable of great vigor, but not perhaps well adapted to poetry of imagination or of passion. These, however, Davenant exhibits but sparingly in *Gondibert*: they are replaced by a philosophical spirit, in the tone of Sir John Davies, who had adopted the same metre, and, as some have thought, nourished by the author's friendly intercourse with Hobbes. *Gondibert* is written in a clear, nervous English style: its condensation produces some obscurity; but pedantry, at least that of language, will rarely be found in it; and Davenant is less infected by the love of conceit and of extravagance than his contemporaries, though I would not assert that he is wholly exempt from the former blemish. But the chief praise of *Gondibert* is due to masculine verse in a good metrical cadence; for the sake of which we may forgive the absence of interest in the story, and even of those glowing words and breathing thoughts which are the soul of genuine poetry. *Gondibert* is very little read; yet it is better worth reading than the *Purple Island*, though it may have less of that which distinguishes a poet from another man.

48. The sonnets of Shakspeare—for we now come to the minor, that is the shorter and more lyric, poetry of the age—were published in 1609, in a manner as <sup>Sonnets of Shakspeare.</sup> mysterious as their subject and contents. They are dedicated by an editor (Thomas Thorpe, a bookseller) “to Mr. W. H., the only begetter of these sonnets.”<sup>1</sup> No one, as far as I remember, has ever doubted their genuineness; no one can doubt that they express not only real but intense emotions of the heart: but when they were written, who was the W. H. quaintly called their begetter, by which we can only understand the cause of their being written, and to what persons or circumstances they allude, has of late years been the subject of much curiosity. These sonnets were long over-

<sup>1</sup> The precise words of the dedication are the following:—

“To the only Begetter  
Of these ensuing Sonnets,  
Mr. W. H.,  
All Happiness  
And that eternally promised  
By our ever-living poet

Wisheth the  
Well-wishing Adventurer  
In setting forth  
T. T.

The titlepage runs: “Shakspeare's Sonnets, never before imprinted, 4to. 1609. G. Eld for T. T.”

looked: Steevens spoke of them with the utmost scorn, as productions which no one could read: but a very different suffrage is generally given by the lovers of poetry; and perhaps there is now a tendency, especially among young men of poetical tempers, to exaggerate the beauties of these remarkable productions. They rise, indeed, in estimation, as we attentively read and reflect upon them; for I do not think that at first they give us much pleasure. No one ever entered more fully than Shakspeare into the character of this species of poetry, which admits of no expletive innegery, no merely ornamental line. But, though each sonnet has generally its proper unity, the sense, I do not mean the grammatical construction, will sometimes be found to spread from one to another, independently of that repetition of the leading idea, like variations of an air, which a series of them frequently exhibits, and on account of which they have latterly been reckoned by some rather an integral poem than a collection of sonnets. But this is not uncommon among the Italians, and belongs, in fact, to those of Petrarch himself. They may easily be resolved into several series, according to their subjects: <sup>1</sup> but, when read attentively, we find them relate to one definite, though obscure, period of the poet's life; in which an attachment to some female, which seems to have touched neither his heart nor his fancy very sensibly, was overpowered, without entirely ceasing, by one to a friend; and this last is of such an enthusiastic character, and so extravagant in the phrases that the author uses, as to have thrown an unaccountable mystery over the whole work. It is true, that in the poetry as well as in the fictions of early ages we find a more ardent tone of affection in the language of friendship than has since been usual; and yet no instance has been adduced of such rapturous devotedness, such an idolatry of admiring love as one of the greatest beings whom nature ever produced: the human form pours forth to some unknown youth in the majority of these sonnets.

49. The notion that a woman was their general object is

<sup>1</sup> This has been done in a late publication, *Shakspeare's Autobiographical Poems*, by George Arncliffe Brown (1838). It might have occurred to any attentive reader; but I do not know that the analysis was ever so completely made before, though almost every one has been aware that different persons are addressed in the

former and latter part of the sonnets. Mr. Brown's work did not fall into my hands till nearly the time that these sheets passed through the press, which I mention on account of some coincidences of opinion, especially as to Shakspeare's knowledge of Latin.

totally untenable, and it is strange that Coleridge should have entertained it.<sup>1</sup> Those that were evidently addressed to a woman, the person above hinted, are by much the smaller part of the whole, — but twenty-eight out of one hundred and fifty-four. And this mysterious Mr. W. H. must be presumed to be the idolized friend of Shakspeare. But who could he be? No one recorded as such in literary history or anecdote answers the description. But if we seize a clew which innumerable passages give us, and suppose that they allude to a youth of high rank as well as personal beauty and accomplishment, in whose favor and intimacy, according to the base prejudices of the world, a player and a poet, though he were the author of *Macbeth*, might be thought honored, something of the strangeness, as it appears to us, of Shakspeare's humiliation in addressing him as a being before whose feet he crouched, whose frown he feared, whose injuries, and those of the most insulting kind, — the seduction of the mistress to whom we have alluded, — he felt and bewailed without resenting; something, I say, of the strangeness of this humiliation, and at best it is but little, may be lightened, and in a certain sense rendered intelligible. And it has been ingeniously conjectured within a few years, by inquirers independent of each other, that William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, born in 1580, and afterwards a man of noble and gallant character, though always of a licentious life, was shadowed under the initials of Mr. W. H. This hypothesis is not strictly proved, but sufficiently so, in my opinion, to demand our assent.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "It seems to me, that the sonnets could only have come from a man deeply in love, and in love with a woman; and there is one sonnet, which, from its incongruities, I take to be a purposed blind." — *Talks Talk*, vol. II. p. 180. This sonnet the editor supposes to be the twentieth, which certainly could not have been addressed to a woman; but the proof is equally strong as to most of the rest. Coleridge's opinion is absolutely untenable: but do I conceive that any one else is likely to maintain it after reading the sonnets of Shakspeare; but, to those who have not done this, the authority may justly seem imposing.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1832, p. 217 *et passim* it will be seen, that this occurred both to Mr. Bowden and Mr. Haynes's Knight. And it does not appear, that Mr. Brown, author of the work above

quoted, had any knowledge of their priority.

Drake has fixed on Lord Southampton as the object of these sonnets, induced probably by the tradition of his friendship with Shakspeare, and by the latter's having dedicated to him his *Venus and Adonis*, as well as by what is remarkable on the face of the series of sonnets, — that Shakspeare looked up to his friend "with reverence and homage." But, unfortunately, this was only the reverence and homage of an inferior to one of high rank, and not such as the virtues of Southampton might have challenged. Proof of the low moral character of "Mr. W. H." are continual. It was also impossible that Lord Southampton could be called "beauteous and lovely youth," or "sweet boy." Mrs. Jameson, in her *Lives of the Poets*, has adopted the same hypothesis, but is forced

The person whom they address.



50. Notwithstanding the frequent beauties of these sonnets, the pleasure of their perusal is greatly diminished by these circumstances; and it is impossible not to wish that Shakespeare had never written them. There is a weakness and folly in all excessive and misplaced affection, which is not redeemed by the touches of nobler sentiments that abound in this long series of sonnets. But there are also faults of a merely critical nature. The obscurity is often such as only conjecture can penetrate; the strain of tenderness and adoration would be too monotonous, were it less unpleasing; and so many frigid conceits are scattered around, that we might almost fancy the poet to have written without genuine emotion, did not such a host of other passages attest the contrary.

51. The sonnets of Drummond of Hawthornden, the most celebrated in that class of poets, have obtained, probably, as much praise as they deserve.<sup>1</sup> But they are polished and elegant, free from conceit and bad taste, in pure unblemished English: some are pathetic or tender in sentiment, and, if they do not show much originality, at least would have acquired a fair place among the Italians of the sixteenth century. Those of Daniel, of Drayton, and of Sir William Alexander, afterwards Earl of Stirling, are perhaps hardly inferior. Some may doubt, however, whether the last poet should be placed on such a level.<sup>2</sup> But the difficulty

in consequence to suppose some of the earlier sonnets to be addressed to a woman.

Pembroke succeeded to his father in 1601: I incline to think that the sonnets were written about that time, some probably earlier, some later. That they were the same as Meres, in 1598, has mentioned among the compositions of Shakespeare, "he suggesteth among his private friends," I do not believe, both on account of the date, and from the peculiarly personal allusions they contain.

Much has been written lately on the subject of Shakespeare's sonnets; and a natural reluctance to admit any failings in such a man has led some to fancy that his mistress was no other than his wife, Ann Hathaway, and others to conjecture that he lent his pen to the amours of a friend. But I have seen no ground to alter my own view of the case, except that possibly some other sonnets may have been meant by Meres. — [1842.]

<sup>1</sup> I concur in this with Mr. Campbell.

<sup>2</sup> 343. Mr. Southey thinks Drummond "has deserved the high reputation he has

obtained;" which seems to say the same thing, but is in fact different. He observes that Drummond "frequently borrows and sometimes translates from the Italian and Spanish poets." — Southey's *British Poets*, p. 738. The furious invective of Clarendon against Drummond for having written private memoranda of his conversations with Ben Jonson, which he did not publish, and which, for aught we know, were perfectly faithful, is absurd. Any one else would have been thankful for so much literary anecdote.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Stirling is rather unpolitic, as sonneteers usually are; and he addresses his mistress by the appellation, "Fair tyrress." Campbell observes that there is elegance of expression in a few of Stirling's shorter pieces. — Vol. iv. p. 206. The longest poem of Stirling is entitled *Domesday*, in twelve books, or, as he calls them, hours. It is written in the Italian octave stanza, and has somewhat of the compressed style of the philosophical school, which he seems to have imitated; but his numbers are harsh.



of finding the necessary rhymes in our language has caused most who have attempted the sonnet to swerve from laws which cannot be transgressed, at least to the degree they have often dared, without losing the unity for which that complex mechanism was contrived. Certainly three quatrains of alternate rhymes, succeeded by a couplet, which Drummond, like many other English poets, has sometimes given us, is the very worst form of the sonnet, even if, in deference to a scanty number of Italian precedents, we allow it to pass as a sonnet at all.<sup>1</sup> We possess, indeed, noble poetry in the form of sonnet; yet with us it seems more fitted for grave than amatory composition: in the latter we miss the facility and grace of our native English measures, the song, the madrigal, or the ballad.

52. Carew is the most celebrated among the lighter poets, though no collection has hitherto embraced his entire writings. Headley has said, and Ellis echoes the praise, that "Carew has the ease without the pedantry of Waller, and perhaps less conceit. Waller is too exclusively considered as the first man who brought versification to any thing like its present standard. Carew's pretensions to the same merit are seldom sufficiently either considered or allowed." Yet, in point of versification, others of the same age seem to have surpassed Carew, whose lines are often very harmonious, but not so artfully constructed or so uniformly pleasing as those of Waller. He is remarkably unequal: the best of his little poems (none of more than thirty lines are good) excel all of his time; but, after a few lines of great beauty, we often come to some ill-expressed or obscure or

<sup>1</sup> The legitimate sonnet consists of two quatrains and two tercets: as much skill, to say the least, is required for the management of the latter as of the former. The rhymes of the last six lines are capable of many arrangements; but by far the worst, and also the least common in Italy, is that we usually adopt, — the fifth and sixth rhyming together, frequently after a full pause, so that the sonnet ends with the point of an epigram. The best, as the Italians hold, is the rhyming together of the three uneven and the three even lines; but, as our language is less rich in consonant terminations, there can be no objection to what has abundant precedents even in theirs, — the rhyming of the first and fourth, second and fifth, third and sixth lines. This, with a break in the sense at

the third line, will make a real sonnet, which Shakespeare, Milton, Bowles, and Wordsworth have often failed to give us, even where they have given us something good instead.

[The common form of the Italian sonnet is called *rima chiusa*; when the rhymes of the two quatrains are 1, 4, 6, 8 — 2, 3, 5, 7; but the alternate rhyme sometimes, though less regularly, occurs. The tercets are either in *rima incatenata*, or *rima alternata*; and great variety is found in these, even among the early poets. Quadrio prefers the order a, b, a, b, a, b, where there are only two rhyming terminations; but does not object to a, b, c, a, b, c; or even a, b, c, b, a, c. The couplet termination he entirely condemns. Quadrio, *Storia d'ogni Poesia*, il. 25. — 1342.]

weak or inharmonious passage. Few will hesitate to acknowledge, that he has more fancy and more tenderness than Wauler, but less choice, less judgment and knowledge where to stop, less of the equability which never offends, less attention to the unity and thread of his little pieces. I should hesitate to give him, on the whole, the preference as a poet, taking collectively the attributes of that character; for we must not, in such a comparison, overlook a good deal of very inferior merit which may be found in the short volume of Carew's poems. The best have great beauty; but he has had, in late criticism, his full share of applause. Two of his most pleasing little poems appear also among those of Herrick; and as Carew's were, I believe, published posthumously, I am rather inclined to prefer the claim of the other poet, independently of some internal evidence as to one of them. In all ages, these very short compositions circulate for a time in polished society, while mistakes as to the real author are natural.<sup>1</sup>

53. The minor poetry of Ben Jonson is extremely beautiful. This is partly mixed with his masques and interludes, poetical and musical rather than dramatic pieces, and intended to gratify the imagination by the charms of song, as well as by the varied scenes that were brought before the eye; partly in very short effusions of a single sentiment, among which two epitaphs are known by heart. Jonson possessed an admirable taste and feeling in poetry, which his dramas, except the *Sad Shepherd*, do not entirely lead us to value highly enough; and, when we consider how many other intellectual excellences distinguished him, — wit, observation, judgment, memory, learning, — we must acknowledge that the inscription on his tomb, "O rare Ben Jonson!" is not more pithy than it is true.

<sup>1</sup> One of these poems begins, —

"Amongst the myrtles as I walk'd,  
Love and my sighs thus intertalk'd."

Herrick wants four good lines which are in Carew; and, as they are rather more likely to have been interpolated than left out, this leads to a sort of inference that he was the original: there are also some other petty improvements. The second poem is that beginning, —

"Ask me why I send you here  
This firstling of the infant year."

Herrick gives the second line strangely,

"This sweet infants of the year,"

which is little else than nonsense; and all

the other variations are for the worse. I must leave it in doubt whether he borrowed, and disfigured a little, or was himself improved upon. I must own that he has a trick of spoiling what he takes. Suckling has an incomparable image on a lady dancing: —

"Her feet beneath the petticoat,  
Like little mice, stole in and out,  
As if they feared the light."

Herrick has it thus: —

"Her pretty feet, like snails, did creep  
A little out;"

a most singular parallel for an elegant dancer.

54. George Wither, by siding with the less poetical though more prosperous party in the civil war, and by a profusion of temporary writings to serve the ends of faction and folly, has left a name which we were accustomed to despise, till Ellis did justice to "that playful fancy, pure taste, and artless delicacy of sentiment, which distinguish the poetry of his early youth." His best poems were published in 1622, with the title, *Mistress of Philarete*. Some of them are highly beautiful, and bespeak a mind above the grovelling Puritanism into which he afterwards fell. I think there is hardly any thing in our lyric poetry of this period equal to Wither's lines on his Muse, published by Ellis.<sup>1</sup>

55. The poetry of Habington is that of a pure and amiable mind, turned to versification by the custom of the age, during a real passion for a lady of birth and virtue, the Castara whom he afterwards married; but it displays no great original power, nor is it by any means exempt from the ordinary blemishes of hyperbolical compliment and far-fetched imagery. The poems of William, Earl of Pembroke, long known by the character drawn for him by Clarendon, and now as the object of Shakspeare's doing friendship, were ushered into the world after his death, with a letter of extravagant flattery addressed by Donne to Christiana, Countess of Devonshire.<sup>2</sup> But there is little reliance to be placed on the freedom from interpolation of these posthumous editions. Among these poems attributed to Lord Pembroke, we find one of the best known of Carew's;<sup>3</sup> and even the famous lines addressed to the Soul, which some have given to Silvester. The poems, in general, are of little merit; some are grossly indecent; nor would they be mentioned here except for the interest recently attached to the author's name. But they throw no light whatever on the sonnets of Shakspeare.

56. Sir John Suckling is acknowledged to have left far behind him all former writers of song in gayety and ease: it is not equally clear that he has ever since been surpassed. His poetry aims at no higher praise: he shows no sentiment or imagination, either because he had

<sup>1</sup> Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Poetry*, 4th. 86.

<sup>2</sup> The only edition that I have seen, of what I find mentioned, of Lord Pembroke's poems is in 1620. But, as Donne died in 1631, I conceive that there must be one

of earlier date. The Countess of Devonshire is not called dowager: her husband died in 1643.

<sup>3</sup> "Ask me no more whither do stray  
The golden atoms of the day."

them not, or because he did not require either in the style he chose. Perhaps the Italians may have poetry in that style equal to Suckling's; I do not know that they have, nor do I believe that there is any in French: that there is none in

Latin I am convinced.<sup>1</sup> Lovelace is chiefly known

by a single song: his other poetry is much inferior; and indeed it may be generally remarked, that the flowers of our early verse, both in the Elizabethan and the subsequent age, have been well culled by good taste and a friendly spirit of selection. We must not judge of them, or shall judge of them very favorably, by the extracts of Healdley or Ellis.

57. The most amorous and among the best of our amorous

**Herrick.** poets was Robert Herrick, a clergyman ejected from his living in Devonshire by the Long Parliament, whose "*Hesperides, or Poems Human and Divine,*" were published in 1633. Herrick's divine poems are, of course, such as might be presumed by their title and by his calling; of his human, which are poetically much superior, and probably written in early life, the greater portion is light and voluptuous, while some border on the licentious and indecent. A selection was published in 1815, by which, as commonly happens, the poetical fame of Herrick does not suffer: a number of dull epigrams are omitted; and the editor has a manifest preference for what must be owned to be the most elegant and attractive part of his author's rhymes. He has much of the lively grace that distinguishes Anacreon and Catullus, and approaches also, with a less cloying monotony, to the *Basia* of *Johannes Secundus*. Herrick has as much variety as the poetry of kisses can well have; but his love is in a very slight degree that of sentiment, or even any intense passion: his mistresses have little to recommend them, even in his own eyes, save their beauties; and none of these are omitted in his catalogues. Yet he is abundant in the resources of verse: without the exuberant gayety of Suckling, or perhaps the delicacy of Carew, he is sportive, fanciful, and generally of polished language. The faults of his age are sometimes apparent: though he is not often obscure, he runs, more perhaps for the sake of variety than any other cause, into occasional pedantry. He has his conceits and false thoughts; but these are more than redeemed by the numerous

<sup>1</sup> Suckling's *Epithalamium*, though not written for those "*qui musas colitis severiores*," has been read by almost all the

world, and is a matchless piece of liveliness and facility.

very little poems (for those of Herrick are frequently not longer than epigrams), which may be praised without much more qualification than belongs to such poetry.

58. John Milton was born in 1609. Few are ignorant of his life, in recovering and recording every circumstance of which no diligence has been spared, nor has it often been unsuccessful. Of his Latin poetry, some was written at the age of seventeen; in English, we have nothing, I believe, the date of which is known to be earlier than the sonnet on entering his twenty-third year. In 1634 he wrote *Comus*, which was published in 1637. *Lycidas* was written in the latter year; and most of his shorter pieces soon afterwards, except the sonnets, some of which do not come within the first half of the century.

59. *Comus* was sufficient to convince any one of taste and feeling, that a great poet had arisen in England, and one partly formed in a different school from his contemporaries. Many of them had produced highly beautiful and imaginative passages; but none had evinced so classical a judgment, none had aspired to so regular a perfection. Jonson had learned much from the ancients; but there was a grace in their best models which he did not quite attain. Neither his *Sad Shepherd* nor the *Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher have the elegance or dignity of *Comus*. A noble virgin and her young brothers, by whom this masque was originally represented, required an elevation, a purity, a sort of severity of sentiment, which no one in that age could have given but Milton. He avoided, and nothing loath, the more festive notes which dramatic poetry was wont to mingle with its serious strain. But for this he compensated by the brightest hues of fancy and the sweetest melody of song. In *Comus* we find nothing prosaic or feeble, no false taste in the incidents, and not much in the language; nothing over which we should desire to pass on a second perusal. The want of what we may call personality,—none of the characters having names, except *Comus* himself, who is a very indefinite being,—and the absence of all positive attributes of time and place, enhance the ideality of the fiction by a certain indistinctness not displeasing to the imagination.

60. It has been said, I think very fairly, that *Lycidas* is a good test of a real feeling for what is peculiarly called poetry. Many, or, perhaps we might say,



most readers do not taste its excellence; nor does it follow that they may not greatly admire Pope and Dryden, or even Virgil and Homer. It is, however, somewhat remarkable that Johnson, who has committed his critical reputation by the most contemptuous depreciation of this poem, had, in an earlier part of his life, selected the tenth eclogue of Virgil for peculiar praise,<sup>1</sup> — the tenth eclogue, which, beautiful as it is, belongs to the same class of pastoral and personal allegory, and requires the same sacrifice of reasoning criticism, as the *Lycidas* itself. In the age of Milton, the poetical world had been accustomed by the Italian and Spanish writers to a more abundant use of allegory than has been pleasing to their posterity; but *Lycidas* is not so much in the nature of an allegory as of a masque: the characters pass before our eyes in imagination, as on the stage; they are chiefly mythological, but not creations of the poet. Our sympathy with the fate of *Lycidas* may not be much stronger than for the desertion of Gallus by his mistress; but many poems will yield an exquisite pleasure to the imagination that produce no emotion in the heart, or none at least except through associations independent of the subject.

61. The introduction of St. Peter, after the fabulous deities of the sea, has appeared an incongruity deserving of censure to some admirers of this poem. It would be very reluctantly that we could abandon to this criticism the most splendid passage it presents. But the censure rests, as I think, on too narrow a principle. In narrative or dramatic poetry, where something like illusion or momentary belief is to be produced, the mind requires an objective possibility, a capacity of real existence, not only in all the separate portions of the imagined story, but in their coherency and relation to a common whole. Whatever is obviously incongruous, whatever shocks our previous knowledge of possibility, destroys, to a certain extent, that acquiescence in the fiction, which it is the true business of the fiction to produce. But the case is not the same in such poems as *Lycidas*. They pretend to no credibility; they aim at no illusion: they are read with the willing abandonment of the imagination to a waking dream, and require only that general possibility, that combination of images which common experience does not reject as incompatible, without which the fancy of the poet would

<sup>1</sup> *Adventurer*, No. 22.

be only like that of the lunatic. And it had been so usual to blend sacred with mythological personages in allegory, that no one probably in Milton's age would have been struck by the objection.

62. The *Allegro* and *Penseroso* are perhaps more familiar to us than any part of the writings of Milton. Allegro and Penseroso. They satisfy the critics, and they delight mankind. The choice of images is so judicious, their succession so rapid, the allusions are so various and pleasing, the leading distinction of the poems is so felicitously maintained, the versification is so animated, that we may place them at the head of that long series of descriptive poems which our language has to boast. It may be added, as in the greater part of Milton's writings, that they are sustained at an uniform pitch, with few blemishes of expression, and scarce any feebleness; a striking contrast, in this respect, to all the contemporaneous poetry, except perhaps that of Waller. Johnson has thought, that, while there is no mirth in his melancholy, he can detect some melancholy in his mirth. This seems to be too strongly put: but it may be said that his *Allegro* is rather cheerful than gay, and that even his cheerfulness is not always without effort. In these poems he is indebted to Fletcher, to Burton, to Browne, to Wither, and probably to more of our early versifiers; for he was a great collector of sweets from those wild flowers.

63. The *Ode on the Nativity*, far less popular than most of the poetry of Milton, is perhaps the finest in the Ode on the Nativity. English language. A grandeur, a simplicity, a breadth of manner, an imagination at once elevated and restrained by the subject, reign throughout it. If Pindar is a model of lyric poetry, it would be hard to name any other ode so truly Pindaric; but more has naturally been derived from the Scriptures. Of the other short poems, that on the death of the Marchioness of Winchester deserves particular mention. It is pity that the first lines are bad, and the last much worse; for rarely can we find more feeling or beauty than in some other passages.

64. The sonnets of Milton have obtained of late years the admiration of all real lovers of poetry. Johnson His Sonnets. has been as impotent to fix the public taste in this instance as in his other criticisms on the smaller poems of the author of *Paradise Lost*. These sonnets are indeed unequal

the expression is sometimes harsh, and sometimes obscure; sometimes too much of pedantic allusion interferes with the sentiment; nor am I reconciled to his frequent deviations from the best Italian structure. But such blemishes are lost in the majestic simplicity, the holy calm, that ennobles many of these short compositions.

65. Many anonymous songs, many popular lays, both of Scottish and English minstrelsy, were poured forth in this period of the seventeenth century. Those of Scotland became, after the union of the crowns, and the consequent cessation of rude border frays, less warlike than before: they are still, however, imaginative, pathetic, and natural. It is probable that the best even of this class are a little older; but their date is seldom determinable with much precision. The same may be said of the English ballads, which, so far as of a merely popular nature, appear, by their style and other circumstances, to belong more frequently to the reign of James I. than any other period.

## SECT. VI.—ON LATIN POETRY.

*Latin Poets of France and other Countries — Of England — May — Milton.*

66. FRANCE, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, had been remarkably fruitful of Latin poetry: it was the pride of her scholars, and sometimes of her statesmen. In the age that we have now in review, we do not find so many conspicuous names; but the custom of academical institutions, and especially of the seminaries conducted by the Jesuits, kept up a facility of Latin versification, which it was by no means held pedantic or ridiculous to exhibit in riper years. The French enumerate several with praise: Guignon; Bourbon (Borbonius), whom some have compared with the best of the preceding century, and among whose poems that on the death of Henry IV. is reckoned the best; Cerisantes, equal, as some of his admirers think, to Sarmenius, and superior, as others presume, to Horace; and Petavius, who, having solaced his leisure hours with Greek

and Hebrew, as well as Latin versification, has obtained in the last the general suffrage of critics.<sup>1</sup> I can speak of none of these from direct knowledge, except of Borbonius, whose Diræ on the death of Henry have not appeared, to my judgment, deserving of so much eulogy.

67. The Germans wrote much in Latin, especially in the earlier decades of this period. Melissus Schedius, <sup>In Germany</sup> not undistinguished in his native tongue, might have been mentioned as a Latin poet in the last volume; since most of his compositions were published in the sixteenth century. In Italy we have not many conspicuous names. The bad taste that infested the school of Marini spread also, according to Tiraboschi, over Latin poetry. Martial, Lucan, and Claudian became in their eyes better models than Catullus and Virgil. Buillet, or rather those whom he copies, and among whom Rossi (author of the *Pinacotheca Virorum Illustrium*, under the name of Erythraeus, a profuse and indiscriminating panegyrist, for the most part, of his contemporaries) furnishes the chief materials, bestows praise on Cesarini, on Querenghi, whom even Tiraboschi selects from the crowd, and on Maffei Barberini, best known as Pope Urban VIII.

68. Holland stood at the head of Europe in this line of poetry. Grotius has had the reputation of writing <sup>In Holland:</sup> with spirit, elegance, and imagination.<sup>2</sup> But he is <sup>Heinsius.</sup> excelled by Heinsius, whose elegies, still more than his hexameters, may be ranked high in modern Latin. The habit, however, of classical imitation, has so much weakened all in individual originality in these versifiers, that it is often difficult to distinguish them, or to pronounce of any twenty lines that they might not have been written by some other author. Compare, for example, the elegies of Buchanan with those of Heinsius, wherever there are no proper names to guide us.

<sup>1</sup> Buillet. *Jugemens des Savans*, has criticised all these and several more. His opinion on Latin poetry is entitled to much regard from his own excellence in it. He praises three lyrists, — Castelnr, Magdelenet, and Corisantes; the two latter being French. "Barleuaki a de l'élévation, mais sans pureté; Magdelenet est pur, mais sans élévation. Corisantes a joint dans ses odes l'un et l'autre; car il écrit noblement, et d'un style assez pur. Après tout, il n'a pas tant de feu que Castelnr, lequel avoit bien de l'esprit, et de cet esprit heureux qui fait les poëtes. Bu-

canaan a des odes dignes de l'antiquité mais il a de grandes fautes par le mélange de son caractère qui n'est pas assez uni." — *Réflexions sur la Poétique*, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> [The *Adamus Eaul* of Grotius, which, after going through several editions in Holland before the middle of the seventeenth century, has lately been retranslated by Mr. Barham, is not only of considerable poetical merit, but deserving of notice, as having suggested much to Milton. Lauder perceived this, but was strangely led to exaggerate the reason blanked by forgery. — 1847.]



A more finished and continued elegance belongs, on the whole (as at least I should say), to the latter: but, in a short passage, this may not be perceptible; and I believe few would guess with much confidence between the two. Heinsius, however like most of the Dutch, is remarkably fond of a polysyllabic close in the pentameter; at least in his *Juvenilia*, which, notwithstanding their title, are perhaps better than his later productions. As it is not necessary to make a distinct head for the Latin drama, we may here advert to a tragedy by Heinsius, *Herodes Infanticida*. This has been the subject of a critique by Balzac, for the most part very favorable; and it certainly contains some highly beautiful passages. Perhaps the description of the Virgin's feelings on the nativity, though praised by Balzac, and exquisitely classical in diction, is not quite in the best taste.<sup>1</sup>

69. Sidonius Hoeschius, a Flemish Jesuit, is extolled by Baillet and his authorities. But another of the same order, Casimir Sarbievius, a Pole, is far better known; and in lyric poetry, which he almost exclusively cultivated, obtained a much higher reputation. He had lived some years at Rome, and is full of Roman allusion. He had read Horace, as Sannazarius had Virgil, and Heinsius Ovid, till the style and tone became spontaneous; but he has more of centonism than the other two. Yet, while he constantly reminds us of Horace, it is with as constant an inferiority: we feel that his Rome was not the same Rome; that Urban VIII. was not Augustus, nor the Polish victories on the Danube like those of the sons of Livia. Hence his flattery of the great, though not a step beyond that of his master, seems rather more displeasing, because we have it only on his word that they were truly great. Sarbievius seldom rises high or pours out an original feeling: but he is free from conceits, never becomes prosaic, and knows how to put in good

Casimir  
Sarbievius.

\* "Oculosque omne hoc pavida nunc  
illuc jactat,  
Interque matrem virginemque haerent adhuc  
Suspensa matris gaudis, ac trepidus  
pudor.  
... sepe, cum blandas puer,  
Aut a rospore languidas jactat manus,  
Tuncrisque labris pectus impactum  
petit,  
Virginea subitus ora perfundit rubor,

Laudemque matris virginis crimen  
putat."

A critique on the poems of Heinsius will be found in the *Retrospective Review*, vol. i. p. 40: but notwithstanding the laudatory spirit, which is for the most part too indiscriminating in that publication, the reviewer has not done justice to Heinsius, and hardly seems, perhaps, a very competent judge of Latin verse. The suffrages of those who were so, in favor of this Ratisian poet, are collected by Baillet, n. 1482.



language the commonplaces with which his subject happens to furnish him. He is to a certain degree, in Latin poetry, what Chiabrera is in Italian, but does not deserve so high a place. Sarbievius was perhaps the first who succeeded much in the *Alonic stanza*, which the earlier poets seem to avoid, or to use unskilfully. But he has many unwarrantable licenses in his metre, and even false quantities, as is common to the great majority of these Latin versifiers.

70. Gasper Barleus had as high a name, perhaps, as any Latin poet of this age. His rhythm is indeed excellent; but, if he ever rises to other excellence, I have not lighted on the passages. A greater equality I have never found than in Barleus: nothing is bad, nothing is striking. It was the practice with Dutchmen on their marriage to purchase *epithalamiums* in hexameter verse; and the muse of Barleus was in request. These nuptial songs are of course about *Peleus* and *Thetis*, or similar personages, interspersed with fitting praises of the bride and bridegroom. Such poetry is not likely to rise high. The *epicedia*, or funeral lamentations, paid for by the heir, are little, if at all, better than the *epithalamia*; and the panegyric effusions on public or private events rather worse. The elegies of Barleus, as we generally find, are superior to the hexameters: he has here the same smoothness of versification, and a graceful gayety which gives us pleasure. In some of his elegies and epistles, he counterfeits the Ovidian style extremely well, so that they might pass for those of his model. Still there is an equability, a recurrence of trivial thoughts and forms, which, in truth, is too much characteristic of modern Latin to be a reproach to Barleus. He uses the polysyllabic termination less than earlier Dutch poets. One of the *epithalamia* of Barleus, it may be observed before we leave him, is entitled *Paradusius*, and recounts the nuptials of Adam and Eve. It is possible that Milton may have seen this: the fourth book of the *Paradise Lost* compresses the excessive diffuseness of Barleus; but the ideas are in great measure the same. Yet, since this must naturally be the case, we cannot presume imitation. Few of the poems of Barleus are so redundant as this: he has the gift of stringing together mythological parallels and descriptive poetry without stint; and his discretion does not inform him where to stop.

71. The eight books of *Sylvæ* by Balde, a German eccle-

siastic, are extolled by Baillet and Bonterwek far above their value: the odes are tumid and unclassical; yet some have called him equal to Horace. Heinsius tried his skill in Greek verse. His *Peplus Græcorum Epigrammatum* was published in 1613. These are what our schoolboys would call very indifferent in point of elegance, and, as I should conceive, of accuracy: articles and expletives (as they used to be happily called) are perpetually employed for the sake of the metre, not of the sense.

72. Scotland might perhaps contend with Holland in this as well as in the preceding age. In the *Deliciæ Poetarum Scotorum*, published in 1637 by Arthur Jonston, we find about an equal produce of each century; the whole number being thirty-seven. Those of Jonston himself, and some elegies by Scot of Scotstarvet, are among the best. The Scots certainly wrote Latin with a good ear, and considerable elegance of phrase. A sort of critical controversy was carried on in the last century as to the versions of the Psalms by Buchanan and Jonston. Though the national honor may seem equally secure by the superiority of either, it has, I believe, been usual in Scotland to maintain the older poet against all the world. I am nevertheless inclined to think, that Jonston's Psalms, all of which are in elegiac metre, do not fall short of those of Buchanan, either in elegance of style or in correctness of Latinity. In the 137th, with which Buchanan has taken much pains, he may be allowed the preference, but not at a great interval; and he has attained this superiority by too much diffuseness.

73. Nothing good, and hardly tolerable, in a poetical sense, had appeared in Latin verse among ourselves till this period. Owen's epigrams (*Audoeni Epigrammata*), a well-known collection, were published in 1607: unequal enough, they are sometimes neat, and more often witty; but they scarcely aspire to the name of poetry. Alabaster, a man of recondite Hebrew learning, published in 1632 his tragedy of *Roxana*, which, as he tells us, was written about forty years before for one night's representation, probably at college, but had been lately printed by some plagiarist as his own. He forgets, however, to inform the reader, and thus lays himself open to some recrimination, that his tragedy is very largely borrowed from the *Didada* of

Balde.

Greek poem  
of Heinsius.Latin poets  
of Scotland.  
Jonston's  
Psalms.Owen's  
epigrams.Alabaster's  
Roxana.

Groto, an Italian dramatist of the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The story, the characters, the incidents, almost every successive scene, many thoughts, descriptions, and images, are taken from this original; but it is a very free translation, or rather differs from what can be called a translation. The tragedy of Groto is shortened; and Alabaster has thrown much into another form, besides introducing much of his own. The plot is full of all the accumulated horror and slaughter in which the Italians delighted on their stage. I rather prefer the original tragedy. Alabaster has spirit and fire, with some degree of skill; but his notion of tragic style is of the "King Cambyse's vein:" he is inflated and hyperbolical to excess, which is not the case with Groto.

74. But the first Latin poetry which England can vaunt is May's Supplement to Lucan, in seven books, which carry down the history of the Pharsalia to the death of Cæsar. This is not only a very spirited poem, but, in many places at least, an excellent imitation. The versification, though it frequently reminds us of his model, is somewhat more negligent. May seems rarely to fall into Lucan's tumid extravagances, or to emulate his philosophical grandeur: but the narration is almost as impetuous and rapid, the images as thronged; and sometimes we have rather a happy imitation of the ingenious sophisms Lucan is apt to employ. The death of Cato and that of Cæsar are among the passages well worthy of praise. In some lines on Cleopatra's intrigue with Cæsar, while married to her brother, he has seized, with felicitous effect, not only the broken cadences, but the love of moral paradox, we find in Lucan.<sup>2</sup>

75. Many of the Latin poems of Milton were written in early life; some even at the age of seventeen. His name, and the just curiosity of mankind to trace the development of a

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for the knowledge of this to a manuscript note I found in the copy of Alabaster's *Roxana* in the British Museum: "Haud multum abest hæc tragoedia a pura versione tragediæ Italianæ Ludovici Groti Cæci Hadriensis cui titulus *Julia*." This induced me to read the tragedy of Groto, which I had not previously done.

The title of *Roxana* runs thus: "*Roxana* tragoedia a plaguriis unguibus vindictæ arcta et ignita ab autore Gul. Alabastro. Lond. 1822."

<sup>2</sup> . . . . . "Nec crimen inno-  
Concubiti alium tall, Cleopatra, puta-  
bunt  
Qui Ptolemæorum thalamos, consuetaque  
iura  
Inceste novere domûs, fratremque sorori  
Conjugo junctam, sacra sub nomine lætas  
Majus adulterio delictum: turpius æset,  
Quis credat? Just! ad thalamos Cleopatra  
mariti.  
Utque minus lecto peccaret, adultera facta  
est."

mighty genius, would naturally attract our regard. They are in themselves full of classical elegance, of thoughts natural and pleasing, of a diction culled with taste from the gardens of ancient poetry, of a versification remarkably well cadenced and grateful to the ear. There is in them, without a marked originality, which Latin verse can rarely admit but at the price of some incorrectness or impropriety, a more individual display of the poet's mind than we usually find. "In the elegies," it is said by Warton, a very competent judge of Latin poetry, "Ovid was professedly Milton's model for language and versification. They are not, however, a perpetual and uniform tissue of Ovidian phraseology. With Ovid in view, he has an original manner and character of his own, which exhibit a remarkable perspicuity of contexture, a native facility and fluency. Nor does his observation of Roman models oppress or destroy our great poet's inherent powers of invention and sentiment. I value these pieces as much for their fancy and genius as for their style and expression. That Ovid, among the Latin poets, was Milton's favorite, appears not only from his elegiac but his hexametric poetry. The versification of our author's hexameters has yet a different structure from that of the *Metamorphoses*: Milton's is more clear, intelligible, and flowing; less desultory, less familiar, and less embarrassed with a frequent recurrence of periods. Ovid is at once rapid and abrupt."<sup>1</sup> Why Warton should have at once supposed Ovid to be Milton's favorite model in hexameters, and yet so totally different as he represents him to be, seems hard to say. The structure of our poet's hexameters is much more Virgilian; nor do I see the least resemblance in them to the manner of Ovid. These Latin poems of Milton bear some traces of juvenility, but, for the most part, such as please us for that very reason: it is the spring-time of an ardent and brilliant fancy, before the stern and sour spirit of polemical Puritanism had gained entrance into his mind,—the voice of the *Allegro* and of *Conus*.

<sup>1</sup> Warton's essay on the Latin poetry of Milton, inserted at length in Todd's edition.

## CHAPTER VI.

## HISTORY OF DRAMATIC LITERATURE FROM 1600 TO 1800.

## SECT. I. — ON THE ITALIAN AND SPANISH DRAMA.

Character of the Italian Theatre in this Age — Bonarelli — The Spanish Theatre — Calderon — Appreciation of his Merits as a Dramatic Poet.

1. THE Italian theatre, if we should believe one of its historians, fell into total decay during the whole course of the seventeenth century, though the number of dramatic pieces of various kinds was by no means small. He makes a sort of apology for inserting in a copious list of dramatic performances any that appeared after 1600, and stops entirely with 1650.<sup>1</sup> But in this he seems hardly to have done justice to a few, which, if not of remarkable excellence, might be selected from the rest. Andreini is perhaps best known by name in England, and that for one only of his eighteen dramas, the *Adamo*, which has been supposed, on too precarious grounds, to have furnished the idea of *Paradise Lost* in the original form, as it was planned by its great author. The *Adamo* was first published in 1613, and afterwards with amplification in 1641. It is denominated "A Sacred Representation;" and, as Andreini was a player by profession, must be presumed to have been brought upon the stage. It is, however, asserted by Riccoboni, that those who wrote regular tragedies did not cause them to be represented: probably he might have scrupled to give that epithet to the *Adamo*. Hayler and Walker have reckoned it a composition of considerable beauty.

2. The majority of Italian tragedies in the seventeenth century were taken, like the *Adamo*, from sacred subjects,

<sup>1</sup> Riccoboni *Hist. du Théâtre Ital.* v. 1. l.

Decline of  
the Italian  
theatre.



including such as ecclesiastical legends abundantly supplied. Few of these gave sufficient scope, either by action or character, for the diversity of excitement which the stage demands. Tragedies more truly deserving that name were the *Solimano* of Bonarelli, the *Tancredi* of Campeggio, the *Demetrio* of Rocco, which Salfi prefers to the rest, and the *Aristodemo* of Carlo de' Dottori. A drama by Testi, *L'Isola di Alcina*, had some reputation; but in this, which the title betrays not to be a legitimate tragedy, he introduced musical airs, and thus trod on the boundaries of a rival art.<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested with no inconsiderable probability, that, in her passion for the melodrame, Italy lost all relish for the graver tone of tragedy. Music, at least the music of the opera, conspired with many more important circumstances to spread an effeminacy over the public character.

3. The pastoral drama had always been allied to musical sentiment, even though it might be without accompaniment. The feeling it inspired was nearly that of the opera. In this style we find one imitation of Tasso and Guarini, inferior in most qualities, yet deserving some regard, and once popular even with the critics of Italy. This was the *Filli di Seiro* of Bonarelli, published at Ferrara—a city already fallen into the hands of priests, but round whose deserted palaces the traditions of poetical glory still lingered—in 1607, and represented by an academy in the same place soon afterwards. It passed through numerous editions, and was admired, even beyond the Alps, during the whole century, and perhaps still longer. It displays much of the bad taste and affectation of that period. Bonarelli is as strained in the construction of history, and in his characters, as he is in his style. Celia, the heroine of this pastoral, struggles with a double love; the original idea, as he might truly think, of his drama, which he wrote a long dissertation in order to justify. It is, however, far less conformable to the truth of nature than to the sophisticated society for which he wrote. A wanton capricious court-lady might perhaps waver, with some warmth of inclination towards both, between two lovers, "*Alme dell' alma mia*," as Celia calls them, and be very willing to possess either. But what is morbid in moral affection seldom creates sympathy, or is fit either for narrative poetry or the stage.

<sup>1</sup> Salfi, *Continuation de l'Inguené*, vol. xii. chap. ix. Besides this larger work, Salfi published in 1829 a short essay on

the Italian stage, *Saggio Storico-Critico della Commedia Italiana*.

Bonarelli's diction is studied and polished to the highest degree; and, though its false refinement and affected graces often displease us, the real elegance of insulated passages makes us pause to admire. In harmony and sweetness of sound, he seems fully equal to his predecessors, Tasso and Guarini; but he has neither the pathos of the one, nor the fertility of the other. The language and turn of thought seems, more than in the *Pastor Fido*, to be that of the opera; wanting, indeed, nothing but the intermixture of air to be perfectly adapted to music. Its great reputation, which even Crescimbeni does his utmost to keep up, proves the decline of good taste in Italy, and the lateness of its revival.<sup>1</sup>

4. A new fashion, which sprung up about 1620, both marks the extinction of a taste for genuine tragedy, and, by furnishing a substitute, stood in the way of its revival. Translations of Spanish dramas. Translations from Spanish tragedies and tragi-comedies, those of Lope de Vega and his successors, replaced the native muse of Italy. These were in prose and in three acts, irregular of course, and with very different characteristics from those of the Italian school. "The very name of tragedy," says Riccoboni, "became unknown in our country: the monsters which usurped the place did not pretend to that glorious title. Tragi-comedies rendered from the Spanish, such as *Life is a Dream* (of Calderon), the *Samson*, the *Guest of Stone*, and others of the same class, were the popular ornaments of the Italian stage."<sup>2</sup>

5. The extemporaneous comedy had always been the amusement of the Italian populace, not to say of all who wished to unbend their minds.<sup>3</sup> Extemporaneous comedy An epoch in this art was made in 1611 by Flaminio Scala, who first published the outline or canvas of a series of these pieces; the dialogue being, of course, reserved for the ingenious performers.<sup>4</sup> This outline was not quite so short as that sometimes given in Italian play-bills: it explained the

<sup>1</sup> *Istoria della volgar Poesia*, iv. 147. He places the *Fidi di Sciro* next to the *Aminta*.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. du Theatre Italien*, i. 47.

<sup>3</sup> The extemporaneous comedy was called *Commedia dell'Arte*. "It consisted," says Bull, "in a mere sketch or plan of a dramatic composition, the parts in which, having been hardly shadowed out, were assigned to different actors who were

to develop them in extemporaneous dialogue." Such a sketch was called a *scenario*, containing the subject of each scene, and those of Flaminio Scala were celebrated. *Saggio Storico-Critico*, p. 38. The pantomime, as it exists among us, is the descendant of this extemporaneous comedy, but with little of the wit and spirit of its progenitor.

<sup>4</sup> Bull, p. 40.

drift of each actor's part in the scene, but without any distinct hint of what he was to say. The construction of these fables is censured by Riccoboni as weak; but it would not be reasonable to expect that it should be otherwise. The talent of the actors supplied the deficiency of writers. A certain quickness of wit, and tact in catching the shades of manner, comparatively rare among us, are widely diffused in Italy. It would be, we may well suspect, impossible to establish an extemporaneous theatre in England which should not be stupidly vulgar.<sup>1</sup> But Bergamo sent out many Harlequins, and Venice many Pantaloons. They were respected, as brilliant wit ought to be. The Emperor Mathias ennobled Cecchini, a famous Harlequin; who was, however, a man of letters. These actors sometimes took the plot of old comedies as their outline, and disfigured them, so as hardly to be known, by their extemporaneous dialogue.<sup>2</sup>

6. Lope de Vega was at the height of his glory at the beginning of this century. Perhaps the majority of his dramas fall within it; but enough has been said on the subject in the last volume. His contemporaries and immediate successors were exceedingly numerous; the effulgence of dramatic literature in Spain corresponding exactly in time to that of England. Several are named by Bouterwek and Velasquez; but one only, Pedro Calderon de la Barca, must be permitted to arrest us. This celebrated man was born in 1600, and died in 1683. From an early age till after the middle of the century, when he entered the church, he contributed, with a fertility only eclipsed by that of Lope, a long list of tragic, historic, comic, and tragi-comic dramas to the Spanish stage. In the latter period of his life, he confined himself to the religious pieces called Autos Sacramentales. Of these, 97 are published in

<sup>1</sup> This is only meant as to dialogue and as to the public stage. The talent of a single actor, like the late Charles Matthews, is not an exception; but even the power of strictly extemporaneous comedy, with the agreeable poliancy that the minor theatre requires, is not wanting among some whose station, and habits of life, restrain its exercise to the most private circles.

<sup>2</sup> Riccoboni, *Hist. du Théâtre Italien* Salfi, xii. 514. An elaborate disquisition on the extemporaneous comedy by Mr. Panizzi, in the *Foreign Review* for 1829 (not the *Foreign Quarterly*, but one early

extinguished), derives it from the mimes and Atellanian comedies of ancient Italy, tracing them through the middle ages. The point seems sufficiently proved. The last company of performers in this odd though plebeian family existed, within about thirty years, in Lombardy. A friend of mine at that time witnessed the last of the Harlequins. I need hardly say that this character was not a mere skipper over the stage, as we have seen him, but a very honest and lively young Bergamasque. The plays of Carlo Gozzi, if plays they are, are mere hints to guide the wit of extemporaneous actors.

the collective edition of 1726, besides 127 of his regular plays. In one year, 1635, it is said that twelve of his comedies appeared; but the authenticity of so large a number has been questioned. He is said to have given a list of his sacred plays, at the age of eighty, consisting of only 68. No collection was published by himself. Some of his comedies, in the Spanish sense of the word, it may be observed, turn more or less on religious subjects, as their titles show: *El Purgatorio de San Patricio*; *La Devocion de la Cruz*; *Judas Maccabeus*; *La Ciama de Inghilterra*. He did not dislike contemporary subjects. In *El Sitio de Breda*, we have Spinola, Nassau, and others then living, on the scene. Calderon's metre is generally trochaic, of eight or seven syllables, not always rhyming; but verses *de arte mayor*, as they were called, or anapestic lines of eleven or twelve syllables, and also hendecasyllables, frequently occur.

7. The comedies, those properly so called, *de capa y espada*, which represent manners, are full of incident, but not perhaps crowded so as to produce any confusion: the characters have nothing very salient, but express the sentiments of gentlemen with frankness and spirit. We find in every one a picture of Spain,—gallantry, jealousy, quick resentment of insult, sometimes deep revenge. The language of Calderon is not unfrequently poetical, even in these lighter dramas; but hyperbolical figures and insipid conceits deform its beauty. The *gracioso*, or witty servant, is an unfailing personage; but I do not know (my reading, however, being extremely limited) that Calderon displays much brilliancy or liveliness in his sallies.

8. The plays of Calderon required a good deal of theatrical apparatus, unless the good nature of the audience dispensed with it. But this kind of comedy must have led to scenical improvements. They seem to contain no indecency; nor do the intrigues ever become criminal, at least in effect: most of the ladies, indeed, are unmarried. Yet they have been severely censured by later critics on the score of their morality, which is no doubt that of the stage, but considerably purified in comparison with the Italian and French of the sixteenth century. Calderon seems to bear no resemblance to any English writer of his age, except, in a certain degree, to Beaumont and Fletcher; and, as he wants their fertility of wit and humor, we cannot, I presume, place the best of his come-



dies on a level with even the second class of theirs. But I should speak, perhaps, with more reserve of an author, very few of whose plays I have read, and with whose language I am very imperfectly acquainted; nor should I have ventured so far, if the opinion of many European critics had not seemed to warrant my frigid character of one who has sometimes been so much applauded.

9. *La Vida es Sueño* rises, in its subject as well as style, above the ordinary comedies of Calderon. Basilina, La Vida es Sueño. King of Poland, a deep philosopher, has, by consulting the stars, had the misfortune of ascertaining that his unborn son Sigismund would be under some extraordinary influences of evil passion. He resolves, in consequence, to conceal his birth, and to bring him up in a horrible solitude, where, it hardly appears why, he is laden with chains, and covered with skins of beasts; receiving meantime an excellent education, and becoming able to converse on every subject, though destitute of all society but that of his keeper Clotaldo. The inheritance of the crown of Poland is supposed to have devolved on Astolfo, Duke of Moscovy; or on his cousin Eatrella, who, as daughter of an elder branch, contests it with him. The play opens by a scene, in which Rosaura, a Moscovite lady, who, having been betrayed by Astolfo, has fled to Poland in man's attire, descends the almost impassable precipices which overhang the small castle wherein Sigismund is confined. This scene, and that in which he first appears, are impressive and full of beauty, even now that we are become accustomed in excess to these theatrical wonders. Clotaldo discovers the prince in conversation with a stranger, who, by the king's general order, must be detained, and probably for death. A circumstance leads him to believe that this stranger is his son; but the Castilian loyalty transferred to Poland forbids him to hesitate in obeying his instructions. The king, however, who has fortunately determined to release his son, and try an experiment upon the force of the stars, coming in at this time, sets Rosaura at liberty.

10. In the next act, Sigismund, who, by the help of a sleeping potion, has been conveyed to the palace, wakes in a bed of down, and in the midst of royal splendor. He has little difficulty in understanding his new condition, but preserves a not unnatural resentment of his former treatment. The malign stars prevail: he treats Astolfo with the utmost arro-



gance, reviles and threatens his father, throws one of his servants out of the window, attempts the life of Clotaldo and the honor of Rosaura. The king, more convinced than ever of the truth of astrology, directs another soporific draught to be administered; and, in the next scene, we find the prince again in his prison. Clotaldo, once more at his side, persuades him that his late royalty has passed in a dream; wisely observing, however, that, asleep or awake, we should always do what is right.

11. Sigismund, after some philosophical reflections, prepares to submit to the sad reality which has displaced his vision. But, in the third act, an unforeseen event recalls him to the world. The army, become acquainted with his rights, and indignant that the king should transfer them to Astolfo, break into his prison, and place him at their head. Clotaldo expects nothing but death. A new revolution, however, has taken place. Sigismund, corrected by the dismal consequences of giving way to passion in his former dream, and apprehending a similar waking once more, has suddenly overthrown the sway of the sinister constellations that had enslaved him: he becomes generous, mild, and master of himself; and, the only pretext for his disinheritance being removed, it is easy that he should be reconciled to his father; that Astolfo, abandoning a kingdom he can no longer claim, should espouse the injured Rosaura; and that the reformed prince should become the husband of Estrella. The incidents which chiefly relate to these latter characters have been omitted in this slight analysis.

12. This tragi-comedy presents a moral not so contemptible in the age of Calderon as it may now appear,—that the stars may influence our will, but do not oblige it. If we could extract an allegorical meaning from the chimeras of astrology and deem the stars but names for the circumstances of birth and fortune which affect the character as well as condition of every man, but yield to the persevering energy of self-correction, we might see in this fable the shadow of a permanent and valuable truth. As a play, it deserves considerable praise: the events are surprising without excessive improbability, and succeed each other without confusion; the thoughts are natural, and poetically expressed; and it requires, on the whole, less allowance for the different standard of national taste than is usual in the Spanish drama.



indeed, he said that the sun had risen in her lady's eyes. Valeta, on the like occasion, speak in the same style; and when lovers address compliments to their mistresses, and these reply in the same strain, the play of far-fetched metaphors is aggravated by antitheses to a degree which is intolerable to any but a Spanish-formed taste. But it must not be forgotten, that this language of gallantry was, in Calderon's time, spoken by the fashionable world, and that it was a vernacular property of the ancient national poetry."<sup>1</sup> What is this but to confess that Calderon had not genius to raise himself above his age, and that he can be read only as a "Triton of the minnows;" one who is great but in comparison with his neighbors? It will not convert bad writing into good, to tell us, as is perpetually done, that we must place ourselves in the author's position, and make allowances for the taste of his age or the temper of his nation. All this is true relatively to the author himself, and may be pleaded against a condemnation of his talents; but the excuse of the man is not that of the work.

15. The fame of Calderon has been latterly revived in Europe through the praise of some German critics, but especially the unbounded panegyric of one of their greatest men, William Schlegel. The passage is well known for its brilliant eloquence. Every one must differ with reluctance and respect from this accomplished writer; and an Englishman, acknowledging with gratitude and admiration what Schlegel has done for the glory of Shakspeare, ought not to grudge the laurels he showers upon another head. It is, however, rather as a poet than a dramatist that Calderon has received this homage; and, in his poetry, it seems to be rather bestowed on the mysticism, which finds a responsive chord in so many German hearts, than on what we should consider a more universal excellence,—a sympathy with, and a power over, all that is true and beautiful in nature and in man. Sismondi (but the distance between Weimar and Geneva in matters of taste is incomparably greater than by the public road), dissenting from this eulogy of Schlegel, which he fairly lays before the reader, stigmatizes Calderon as eminently the poet of the age wherein he lived,—

His merits  
sometimes  
overrated.

<sup>1</sup> P. 507. It has been ingeniously hinted in the Quarterly Review, vol. xxv., that the high-flown language of servants in Spanish dramas is a parody on that of

their masters, and designed to make it ridiculous. But this is probably too refined an excuse.

the age of Philip IV. Salfi goes so far as to say we can hardly read Calderon without indignation; since he seems to have had no view but to make his genius subservient to the lowest prejudices and superstitions of his country.<sup>1</sup> In the twenty-fifth volume of the Quarterly Review, an elaborate and able critique on the plays of Calderon seems to have estimated him without prejudice on either side. "His boundless and inexhaustible fertility of invention, his quick power of seizing and prosecuting every thing with dramatic effect, the unfulfilling animal spirits of his dramas (if we may venture on the expression), the general loftiness and purity of his sentiments, the rich facility of his verse, the abundance of his language, and the clearness and precision with which he embodies his thoughts in words and figures, entitle him to a high rank as to the imagination and creative faculty of a poet; but we cannot consent to enrol him among the mighty masters of the human breast."<sup>2</sup> His total want of truth to nature, even the ideal nature which poetry embodies, justifies at least this sentence. "The wildest flights of Biron and Romeo," it is observed, "are tame to the heroes of Calderon: the Asiatic pomp of expression, the exuberance of metaphor, the perpetual recurrence of the same figures (which the poetry of Spain derived from its intercourse with the Arabian conquerors of the peninsula), are lavished by him in all their fulness. Every address of a lover to a mistress is thickly studded with stars and flowers: her locks are always nets of gold, her lips rubies, and her heart a rock, which the rivers of his tears attempt in vain to melt. In short, the language of the heart is entirely abandoned for that of the fancy: the brilliant but false *concelli* which have infected the poetical literature of every country, and which have been universally exploded by pure taste, glitter in every page, and intrude into every speech."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Litt. de l'Espagne, vol. xii p. 400.

<sup>2</sup> P. 24.

<sup>3</sup> P. 24.

## SECT. II.—ON THE FRENCH DRAMA.

Early French Dramatists of this Period — Corneille — His principal Tragedies — Rotrou.

16. AMONG the company who performed at the second theatre of Paris, that established in the Marais, was <sup>Plays of</sup> Hardy, who, like Shakspeare, uniting both arts, was <sup>Hardy.</sup> himself the author of 600, or, as some say, 800 dramatic pieces. It is said that forty-one of these are extant in the collection of his works, which I have never seen. Several of them were written, learned by heart, and represented within a week. His own inventions are the worst of all: his tragedies and tragi-comedies are borrowed, with as close an adherence to the original text as possible, from Homer or Plutarch or Cervantes. They have more incident than those of his predecessors, and are somewhat less absurd; but Hardy is a writer of little talent. The Marianne is the most tolerable of his tragedies. In these he frequently abandoned the chorus; and, even where he introduces it, does not regularly close the act with an ode.<sup>1</sup>

17. In the comedies of Hardy, and in the many burlesque farces represented under Henry IV. and Louis XIII., no regard was paid to decency, either in the language or the circumstances. Few persons of rank, especially ladies, attended the theatres.<sup>2</sup> These were first attracted by pastoral representations, of which Racan gave a successful example in his *Artenice*. It is hardly, however, to be called a drama. But the stage being no longer abandoned to the populace, and a more critical judgment in French literature gaining ground (encouraged by Richelieu, who built a large room in his palace for the representation of *Mirame*, an indifferent tragedy, part

<sup>1</sup> Fontenelle, *Hist. du Théâtre François*, (in *Œuvres de Fontenelle*, iii. 72); Suard, *Mélanges de Littérature*, vol. II.

<sup>2</sup> *Suard*, p. 134. Rotrou boasts, that, since he wrote for the theatre, it had become so well regulated, that respectable women might go to it with as little scruple as to the Luxembourg Garden. Corneille, however, has, in general, the credit of having purified the stage: after his second piece, *Citandre*, he admitted no-

thing licentious in his comedies. The only remnant of grossness, Fontenelle observes, was that the lovers *se tutoient*; but, as he gravely goes on to remark, "le tutoiement ne choque pas les bonnes mœurs; il ne choque que la politesse et la vraie galanterie."—p. 91. But the last instance of this heinous offence is in *Le menteur*.

<sup>3</sup> Suard, *ubi supra*



of which was suspected to be his own<sup>1</sup>), the ancient theatre began to be studied; rules were laid down, and partially observed; a perfect decorum replaced the licentiousness and gross language of the old writers. Mairet and Rotrou, though without rising in their first plays much above Hardy, just served to prepare the way for the father and founder of the national theatre.<sup>2</sup>

18. The *Mélite* of Corneille, his first production, was represented in 1629, when he was twenty-three years of age. This is only distinguished, as some say, from those of Hardy by a greater vigor of style; but Fontenelle gives a very different opinion. It had at least a success which caused a new troop of actors to be established in the *Murais*. His next, *Clitandre*, it is agreed, is not so good. But *La Veuve* is much better: irregular in action, but with spirit, character, and well-invented situations, it is the first model of the higher comedy.<sup>3</sup> These early comedies must, in fact, have been relatively of considerable merit, since they raised Corneille to high reputation, and connected him with the literary men of his time. The *Medea*, though much borrowed from Seneca, gave a tone of grandeur and dignity unknown before to French tragedy. This appeared in 1635, and was followed by the *Cid* next year.

19. Notwithstanding the defence made by La Harpe, I cannot but agree with the French Academy in their criticism on this play, that the subject is essentially ill chosen. No circumstances can be imagined, no skill can be employed, that will reconcile the mind to the marriage of a daughter with one that has shed her father's blood; and the law of unity of time, which crowds every event of the drama within a few hours, renders the promised consent of Chimène (for such it is) to this union still more revolting and improbable.<sup>4</sup> The knowledge of this termination re-acts on the reader during a second perusal, so as to give an irresistible impression of her insincerity in her previous solicitations for his death. She seems indeed, in several passages, little else

<sup>1</sup> Fontenelle, pp. 84, 90.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 78. It is difficult in France, as it is with us, to ascertain the date of plays, because they were often represented for years before they came from the press. It is conjectured by Fontenelle, that one or two pieces of Mairet and Rotrou may have preceded any by Corneille.

<sup>3</sup> Suard; Fontenelle; La Harpe.

<sup>4</sup> La Harpe has said that Chimène does not promise at last to marry Rodrigue, though the spectator perceives that she will do so. He forgets that she has commissioned her lover's sword in the duel with Don Sanche:—

"Sera vainqueur d'un combat dont Chimène est le prix."—*Act 5. sc. 1.*

than a tragic coquette, and one of the most odious kind.<sup>1</sup> The English stage at that time was not exempt from great violations of nature and decorum: yet, had the subject of the *Cid* fallen into the hands of Beaumont and Fletcher (and it is one which they would have willingly selected, for the sake of the effective situations and contrasts of passion it affords), the part of Chimène would have been managed by them with great warmth and spirit, though probably not less incongruity and extravagance; but I can scarcely believe that the conclusion would have been so much in the style of comedy. Her death, or retirement into a monastery, would have seemed more consonant to her own dignity and to that of a tragic subject. Corneille was, however, borne out by the tradition of Spain, and by the authority of Guillen de Castro, whom he imitated.

20. The language of Corneille is elevated; his sentiments, if sometimes hyperbolical, generally noble, when he <sup>style of</sup> has not to deal with the passion of love. Conscious <sup>Corneille.</sup> of the nature of his own powers, he has avoided subjects wherein this must entirely predominate: it was to be, as he thought, an accessory but never a principal source of dramatic interest. In this, however, as a general law of tragedy, he was mistaken: love is by no means unfit for the chief source of tragic distress, but comes in generally with a cold and feeble effect as a subordinate emotion. In those Roman stories which he most affected, its expression could hardly be otherwise than insipid and incongruous. Corneille probably would have dispensed with it, like Shakspeare in *Coriolanus* and *Julius Caesar*; but the taste of his contemporaries, formed in the pedantic school of romance, has imposed fetters on his genius in almost every drama. In the *Cid*, where the subject left him no choice, he has perhaps succeeded better in the delineation of love than on any other occasion: yet even here we often find the cold exaggerations of complimentary verse, instead of the voice of nature. But other scenes of this play, especially in the first act, which bring forward the proud Castilian characters of the two fathers of Rodrigo and Chi-

<sup>1</sup> In these lines, for example, of the third act, scene 4th:—

“Malgré les feux si beaux qui rompent ma colère,  
Je sens non possible à bien venger mon père;  
Mais malgré la rigueur d’un si cruel devoir,  
Mon unique souhait est de ne rien pouvoir.”

It is true that he found this in his Spanish original; but that does not render the imitation judicious, or the sentiment either moral, or even theatrically specious.

mène, are full of the nervous eloquence of Corneille; and the general style, though it may not have borne the fastidious criticism either of the Academy or of Voltaire, is so far above any thing which had been heard on the French stage, that it was but a very frigid eulogy in the former to say that it "had acquired a considerable reputation among works of the kind." It had at that time astonished Paris: but the prejudices of Cardinal Richelieu and the envy of inferior authors, joined perhaps to the proverbial unwillingness of critical bodies to commit themselves by warmth of praise, had some degree of influence on the judgment which the Academy pronounced on the *Cid*; though I do not think it was altogether so unjust and uncandid as has sometimes been supposed.

21. The next tragedy of Corneille, *Les Horaces*, is hardly open to less objection than the *Cid*; not so much because there is, as the French critics have discovered, a want of unity in the subject, which I do not quite perceive, nor because the fifth act is tedious and uninteresting, as from the repulsiveness of the story, and the jarring of the sentiments with our natural sympathies. Corneille has complicated the legend in Livy with the marriage of the younger Horatius to the sister of the Curiatii, and thus placed his two female personages in a nearly similar situation, which he has taken little pains to diversify by any contrast in their characters. They speak, on the contrary, nearly in the same tone; and we see no reason why the hero of the tragedy should not, as he seems half disposed, have followed up the murder of his sister by that of his wife. More skill is displayed in the opposition of character between the combatants themselves; but the mild, though not less courageous or patriotic, Curiatius attaches the spectator, who cares nothing for the triumph of Rome, or the glory of the Horatian name. It must be confessed, that the elder Horatius is nobly conceived: the Roman energy, of which we find but a caricature in his brutish son, shines out in him with an admirable dramatic spirit. I shall be accused, nevertheless, of want of taste, when I confess that his celebrated *Qu'il mourût* has always seemed to me less eminently sublime than the general suffrage of France has declared it. There is nothing very novel or striking in the proposition, that a soldier's duty is to die in the field rather than desert his post by flight; and, in a tragedy full of the hyperboles of Roman patriotism, it appears strange that we

should be astonished at that which is the principle of all military honor. The words are emphatic in their position, and calculated to draw forth the actor's energy: but this is an artifice of no great skill; and one can hardly help thinking, that a spectator in the pit would spontaneously have anticipated the answer of a warlike father to the feminine question, —

"Que voulez-vous qu'il fit contre trois?"

The style of this tragedy is reckoned by the critics superior to that of the *Cid*; the nervousness and warmth of Corneille is more displayed; and it is more free from incorrect and trivial expression.

22. *Cinna*, the next in order of time, is probably that tragedy of Corneille which would be placed at the head by a majority of suffrages. His eloquence reached here its highest point; the speeches are longer, more vivid in narration, more philosophical in argument, more abundant in that strain of Roman energy which he had derived chiefly from Lucan, more emphatic and condensed in their language and versification. But, as a drama, this is deserving of little praise: the characters of *Cinna* and *Maximus* are contemptible, that of *Emilia* is treacherous and ungrateful. She is indeed the type of a numerous class who have followed her in works of fiction, and sometimes, unhappily, in real life; the female patriot, theoretically, at least, an assassin, but commonly compelled, by the iniquity of the times, to console herself in practice with safer transgressions. We have had some specimens; and other nations, to their shame and sorrow, have had more. But even the magnanimity of *Augustus*, whom we have not seen exposed to instant danger, is uninteresting; nor do we perceive why he should bestow his friendship as well as his forgiveness on the detected traitor that cowers before him. It is one of those subjects which might, by the invention of a more complex plot than history furnishes, have better excited the spectator's attention, but not his sympathy.

23. A deeper interest belongs to *Polyeucte*; and this is the only tragedy of Corneille wherein he affects the heart. There is, indeed, a certain incongruity, which we cannot overcome, between the sanctity of Christian martyrdom and the language of love, especially when the latter is



rather the more prominent of the two in the conduct of the drama.<sup>1</sup> But the beautiful character of Pauline would redeem much greater defects than can be ascribed to this tragedy. It is the noblest, perhaps, on the French stage, and conceived with admirable delicacy and dignity.<sup>2</sup> In the style, however, of *Polyeucte*, there seems to be some return towards the languid tone of commonplace which had been wholly thrown off in *Cinna*.<sup>3</sup>

24. *Rodogune* is said to have been a favorite with the author. It can hardly be so with the generality of his readers. The story has all the atrocity of the older school, from which Corneille, in his earlier plays, had emancipated the stage. It borders even on ridicule. Two princes, kept by their mother, one of those furies whom our own Webster or Marston would have delighted to draw, in ignorance which is the elder, and consequently entitled to the throne, are enamoured of *Rodogune*. Their mother makes it a condition of declaring the succession, that they should shed the blood of this princess. Struck with horror at such a proposition, they refer their passion to the choice of *Rodogune*, who, in her turn, demands the death of their mother. The embarrassment of these amiable youths may be conceived. *La Harpe* extols the fifth act of this tragedy, and it may perhaps be effective in representation.

25. *Pompey*, sometimes inaccurately called the *Death of Pompey*, is more defective in construction than even any other tragedy of Corneille. The hero, if *Pompey* is such, never appears on the stage; and, his death being recounted at the beginning of the second act, the real subject of the piece, so far as it can be said to have one, is the punishment of his assassins; a retribution demanded by the moral

<sup>1</sup> The coteries at the *Hôtel Rambouillet* thought that *Polyeucte* would not succeed, on account of its religious character. Corneille, it is said, was about to withdraw his tragedy; but was dissuaded by an actor of so little reputation that he did not even bear a part in the performance. Fontenelle, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Fontenelle thinks that it shows "un grand attachement à son devoir, et un grand caractère" in Pauline to desire that *Severus* should save her husband's life, instead of procuring the latter to be executed that she might marry her lover. *Reflexions sur la Poétique*, sect. 16. This is rather an odd notion of what is suffi-

cient to constitute an heroic character. It is not the conduct of Pauline, which, in every Christian or virtuous woman, must naturally be the same, but the fine sentiments and language which accompany it, that render her part so noble.

<sup>3</sup> In the second scene of the second act, between *Severus* and Pauline, two characters of the most elevated class, the former quite the stage with this line, —

"Adieu, trop vertueux objet, et trop charmant."

The latter replies, —

"Adieu, trop malheureux, et trop parfait amant."



sense of the spectator, but hardly important enough for dramatic interest. The character of Caesar is somewhat weakened by his passion for Cleopatra, which assumes more the tone of devoted gallantry than truth or probability warrants; but Cornelia, though with some Lucanic extravagance, is full of a Roman nobleness of spirit, which renders her, after Pauline, but at a long interval, the finest among the female characters of Corneille. The language is not beneath that of his earlier tragedies.

26. In *Heraclius* we begin to find an inferiority of style. Few passages, especially after the first act, are written with much vigor; and the plot, instead of the faults we may ascribe to some of the former dramas, a too great simplicity and want of action, offends by the perplexity of its situations, and still more by their nature; since they are wholly among the proper resources of comedy. The true and the false *Heraclius*, each uncertain of his paternity, each afraid to espouse one who may or may not be his sister; the embarrassment of Phocas, equally irritated by both, but aware that, in putting either to death, he may punish his own son; the art of Leontine, who produces this confusion, not by silence, but by a series of inconsistent falsehoods, — all these are in themselves ludicrous, and such as in comedy could produce no other effect than laughter.

27. *Nicomède* is generally placed by the critics below *Heraclius*; an opinion in which I should hardly concur. The plot is feeble and improbable, but more tolerable than the strange entanglements of *Heraclius*; and the spirit of Corneille shines out more in the characters and sentiments. None of his later tragedies deserve much notice, except that we find one of his celebrated scenes in *Sertorius*, a drama of little general merit. *Nicomède* and *Sertorius* were both first represented after the middle of the century.

28. Voltaire has well distinguished "the fine scenes of Corneille, and the fine tragedies of Racine." It can perhaps hardly be said, that, with the exception of *Polycète*, the former has produced a single play which, taken as a whole, we can commend. The keys of the passions were not given to his custody. But in that which he introduced upon the French stage, and which long continued to be its boast, — impressive, energetic declamation, thoughts masculine, bold, and sometimes sublime, conveyed in

*Heraclius.*

*Nicomède.*

Faults and  
beauties of  
Corneille.

a style for the most part clear, condensed, and noble, and in a rhythm sonorous and satisfactory to the ear, — he has not since been equalled. Lucan, it has always been said, was the favorite study of Corneille. No one, perhaps, can admire one who has not a strong relish for the other. That the tragedian has ever surpassed the highest flights of his Roman prototype, it might be difficult to prove: but, if his fire is not more intense, it is accompanied by less smoke; his hyperboles, for such he has, are less frequent and less turgid; his taste is more judicious; he knows better, especially in description, what to choose and where to stop. Lucan, however, would have disdained the politeness of the amorous heroes of Corneille; and though often tedious, often offensive to good taste, is never languid or ignoble.

29. The first French comedy written in polite language, without low wit or indecency, is due to Corneille, or rather, in some degree, to the Spanish author whom he copied in *Le Menteur*. This has been improved a little by Goldoni; and our own well-known farce, *The Liar*, is borrowed from both. The incidents are diverting, but it belongs to the subordinate class of comedy; and a better moral would have been shown in the disgrace of the principal character. Another comedy about the same time, *Le Pédant Joué*, by Cyrano de Bergerac, had much success. It has been called the first comedy in prose, and the first wherein a provincial dialect is introduced: the remark, as to the former circumstance, shows a forgetfulness of *Larivey*. *Moïse* has borrowed freely from this play.

30. The only tragedies, after those of Corneille, anterior to 1650, which the French themselves hold worthy of remembrance, are the *Sophonisbe* of Mairet, in which some characters and some passages are vigorously conceived, but the style is debased by low and ludicrous thoughts, which later critics never fail to point out with severity;<sup>1</sup> the *Scevole* of Duryer, — the best of several good tragedies, full of lines of great simplicity in expression, but which seem to gain force through their simplicity, — by one who, though never sublime, adopted with success the severe and reasoning style of Corneille;<sup>2</sup> the *Marianne* of Tristun, which, at its appearance in 1637, passed for a rival of the *Cid*, and remained for a century on the stage, but is now

Other  
French  
tragedies.

<sup>1</sup> Suard, *ubi suprad.*

<sup>2</sup> Suard, p. 196.

ridiculed for a style alternately turgid and ludicrous; and the Wenceslas of Rotrou, which had not ceased perhaps thirty years since to be represented.

31. This tragedy, the best work of a fertile dramatist, who did himself honor by a ready acknowledgment of <sup>Wenceslas</sup> the superiority of Corneille, instead of canvassing <sup>of Rotrou.</sup> the suffrages of those who always envy genius, is by no means so much below that great master, as, in the unfortunate efforts of his later years, he was below himself. Wenceslas was represented in 1647. It may be admitted, that Rotrou had conceived his plot, which is wholly original, in the spirit of Corneille: the masculine energy of the sentiments, the delineation of bold and fierce passions, of noble and heroic love, the attempt even at political philosophy, are copies of that model. It seems, indeed, that in several scenes Rotrou must, out of mere generosity to Corneille, have determined to outdo one of his most exceptionable passages, the consent of Chimène to espouse the Cid. His own curtain drops on the vanishing reluctance of his heroine to accept the hand of a monster whom she hated, and who had just murdered her lover in his own brother. It is the Lady Anne of Shakspere; but Lady Anne is not a heroine. Wenceslas is not unworthy of comparison with the second class of Corneille's tragedies. But the ridiculous tone of language and sentiment which the heroic romance had rendered popular, and from which Corneille did not wholly emancipate himself, often appears in this piece of Rotrou; the intrigue is rather too complex, in the Spanish style, for tragedy; the diction seems frequently obnoxious to the most indulgent criticism; but, above all, the story is essentially ill contrived, ending in the grossest violation of poetical justice ever witnessed on the stage, the impunity and even the triumph of one of the worst characters that was ever drawn.

## SECT. III.—ON THE ENGLISH DRAMA.

London Theatres—Shakspeare—Jonson—Beaumont and Fletcher—Massinger—  
Other English Dramatists

32. THE English drama had been encouraged through the reign of Elizabeth by increasing popularity, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of a party sufficiently powerful to enlist the magistracy, and, in a certain measure the government, on its side. A progressive improvement in dramatic writing, possibly also, though we know less of this, in the skill of the actors, ennobled, while it kept alive, the public taste; the crude and insipid compositions of an Edwards or a Whetstone, among numbers more whose very names are lost, gave way to the real genius of Green and Marlowe, and after them to Shakspeare.

33. At the beginning of this century, not less than eleven regular play-houses had been erected in London and its suburbs: several of which, it appears, were still in use; an order of the privy council in 1600, restraining the number to two, being little regarded. Of these, the most important was that of the Black Friars, with which another, called the Globe, on the opposite side of the river, was connected; the same company performing at the former in winter, at the latter in summer. This was the company of which Burbage, the best actor of the day, was chief, and to which Shakspeare, who was also a proprietor, belonged. Their names appear in letters patent, and other legal instruments.<sup>1</sup>

34. James was fond of these amusements, and had encouraged them in Scotland. The Puritan influence, which had been sometimes felt in the council of Elizabeth, came speedily to an end; though the representation of plays on Sundays, a constant theme of complaint, but

<sup>1</sup> Shakspeare probably retired from the stage as a performer soon after 1603: his name appears among the actors of *Sejanus* in 1603, but not among those of *Volpone* in 1606. There is a tradition that James

I. wrote a letter thanking Shakspeare for the compliment paid to him in *Macbeth*. Malone, it seems, believed this: Mr. Collier does not, and probably most people will be equally sceptical. Collier, i. 370.



never wholly put down, was now abandoned, and is not even tolerated by the Declaration of Sports. The several companies of players, who, in her reign, had been under the nominal protection of some men of rank, were now denominated the servants of the king, the queen, or other royal personages.<sup>1</sup> They were relieved from some of the vexatious control they had experienced, and subjected only to the gentle sway of the Master of the Revels. It was his duty to revise all dramatic works before they were represented, to exclude profane and unbecoming language, and specially to take care that there should be no interference with matters of state. The former of these corrective functions must have been rather laxly exercised; but there are instances in which a license was refused on account of very recent history being touched in a play.

35. The reigns of James and Charles were the glory of our theatre. Public applause, and the favor of princes, were well bestowed on those bright stars of our literature who then appeared. In 1623, when Sir Henry Herbert became Master of the Revels, there were five companies of actors in London. This, indeed, is something less than at the accession of James; and the latest historian of the drama suggests the increase of Puritanical sentiments as a likely cause of this apparent decline. But we find little reason to believe, that there was any decline in the public taste for the theatre; and it may be as probable an hypothesis, that the excess of competition, at the end of Elizabeth's reign, had rendered some undertakings unprofitable; the greater fishes, as usual in such cases, swallowing up the less. We learn from Howes, the continuator of Stow, that, within sixty years before 1631, seventeen play-houses had been built in the metropolis. These were now larger and more convenient than before. They were divided into public and private: not that the former epithet was inapplicable to both; but those styled public were not completely roofed, nor well provided with seats, nor were the performances by can-

General  
taste for  
the stage.

<sup>1</sup> Collier, i. 247. But the privilege of peers to grant license to itinerant players, given by statute 14 Edw. c. 6, and 39 Edw. c. 4, was taken away by 1 Jac. I. c. 7, so that they became liable to be treated as vagrants. Accordingly there were no established theatres in any provincial city; and strollers, though dear to the lovers of

the buckin, were always obnoxious to grave magistrates. The license, however, granted to Burbage, Shakespeare, Hemmings, and others, in 1603, authorized them to act plays not only at the usual house, but in any other part of the kingdom. Burbage was reckoned the best actor of his time, and excelled as Richard III.



dle-light: they resembled more the rude booths we still see at fairs, or the constructions in which interludes are represented by day in Italy; while private theatres, such as that of the Black Friars, were built in nearly the present form. It seems to be the more probable opinion, that movable scenery was unknown on these theatres. "It is a fortunate circumstance," Mr. Collier has observed, "for the poetry of our old plays, that it was so: the imagination of the auditor only was appealed to; and we owe to the absence of painted canvas many of the finest descriptive passages in Shakspeare, his contemporaries, and immediate followers. The introduction of scenery gives the date to the commencement of the decline of our dramatic poetry." In this remark, which seems as original as just, I entirely concur. Even in this age, the prodigality of our theatre in its peculiar boast, scene-painting, can hardly keep pace with the creative powers of Shakspeare: it is well that he did not live when a manager was to estimate his descriptions by the cost of realizing them on canvas, or we might never have stood with Lear on the cliffs of Dover, or amidst the palaces of Venice with Shylock and Antonio. The scene is perpetually changed in our old drama, precisely because it was not changed at all. A powerful argument might otherwise have been discovered in favor of the unity of place, that it is very cheap.

36. Charles, as we might expect, was not less inclined to this liberal pleasure than his predecessors. It was to his own cost that Prynne assaulted the stage in his immense volume, the *Histriomastix*. Even Milton, before the foul spirit had wholly entered into him, extolled the learned sock of Jonson, and the wild wood-notes of Shakspeare. But these days were soon to pass away; the ears of Prynne were avenged: by an order of the two houses of parliament, Sept. 2, 1642, the theatres were closed as a becoming measure during the season of public calamity and impending civil war; but, after some unsuccessful attempts to evade this prohibition, it was thought expedient, in the complete success of the party who had always abhorred the drama, to put a stop to it altogether; and another ordinance of Jan. 22, 1648, reciting the usual objections to all such entertainments, directed the theatres to be rendered unserviceable. We must refer the reader to the valuable work which has supplied the sketch of these pages for further

Theatres  
closed by  
the parlia-  
ment.

knowledge:<sup>1</sup> it is more our province to follow the track of those who most distinguished a period so fertile in dramatic genius; and first that of the greatest of them all.

37. Those who originally undertook to marshal the plays of Shakspeare according to chronological order, always attending less to internal evidence than to the very fallible proofs of publication they could obtain, placed *Twelfth Night* last of all, in 1612 or 1613. It afterwards rose a little higher in the list; but Mr. Collier has finally proved that it was on the stage early in 1602, and was at that time chosen, probably as rather a new piece, for representation at one of the Inns of Court.<sup>2</sup> The general style resembles, in my judgment, that of *Much Ado about Nothing*, which is referred with probability to the year 1600. *Twelfth Night*, notwithstanding some very beautiful passages, and the humorous absurdity of Malvolio, has not the coruscations of wit, and spirit of character, that distinguish the excellent comedy it seems to have immediately followed; nor is the plot nearly so well constructed. Viola would be more interesting, if she had not indelicately, as well as unfairly towards Olivia, determined to win the Duke's heart before she had seen him. The part of Sebastian has all that improbability which belongs to mistaken identity, without the comic effect for the sake of which that is forgiven in Plautus and in the Comedy of Errors.

38. The *Merry Wives of Windsor* is that work of Shakspeare in which he has best displayed English manners; for though there is something of this in the historical plays, yet we rarely see in them such a picture of actual life as comedy ought to represent. It may be difficult to say for what cause he has abstained from a source of gayety whence his prolific invention, and keen eye for the diversities of character, might have drawn so much. The Masters Knowell and Wellborn, the young gentlemen who spend their money freely and make love to rich widows (an insipid race of personages, it must be owned), recur for ever in the old plays of James's reign; but Shakspeare threw

*Merry  
Wives of  
Windsor.*

<sup>1</sup> I have made no particular references to Mr. Collier's *double work*, The History of English Dramatic Poetry, and Annals of the Stage: it will be necessary for the reader to make use of his index; but few books lately published contain so much valuable and original information, though

not entirely arranged in the most convenient manner. He seems, nevertheless, to have obligations to Dodsley's preface to his Collection of Old Plays, or rather perhaps to Reed's edition of it.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i. p. 327.

an idealism over this class of characters, the Bassanios, the Valentines, the Gratianos, and placed them in scenes which neither by dress nor manners recalled the prose of ordinary life.<sup>1</sup> In this play, however, the English gentleman, in age and youth, is brought upon the stage, slightly caricatured in Shallow, and far more so in Slender. The latter, indeed, is a perfect satire, and I think was so intended, on the brilliant youth of the provinces, such as we may believe it to have been before the introduction of newspapers and turnpike roads; awkward and boobyish among civil people, but at home in rude sports, and proud of exploits at which the town would laugh, yet perhaps with more courage and good-nature than the laughers. No doubt can be raised that the family of Lucy is ridiculed in Shallow; but those who have had recourse to the old fable of the deer-stealing, forget that Shakspeare never lost sight of his native county, and went, perhaps, every summer, to Stratford. It is not impossible that some arrogance of the provincial squires towards a player, whom, though a gentleman by birth and the recent grant of arms, they might not reckon such, excited his malicious wit to these admirable delineations.

39. The *Merry Wives of Windsor* was first printed in 1602, but very materially altered in a subsequent edition. It is wholly comic; so that Dodd, who published the beauties of Shakspeare, confining himself to poetry, says it is the only play which afforded him nothing to extract. This play does not excite a great deal of interest; for Anne Page is but a sample of a character not very uncommon, which, under a garb of placid and decorous mediocrity, is still capable of pursuing its own will. But, in wit and humorous delineation, no other goes beyond it. If Falstaff seems, as Johnson has intimated, to have lost some of his powers of merriment, it is because he is humiliated to a point where even his inventiveness and impudence cannot bear him off victorious. In the first acts, he is still the same Jack Falstaff of the Boar's Head. Jonson's earliest comedy, *Every Man in his Humor*, had appeared a few years before the *Merry Wives of Windsor*; they both turn on English life in the middle classes, and on

<sup>1</sup> "No doubt," says Coleridge, "they (Beaumont and Fletcher) imitated the ease of gentlemanly conversation better than Shakspeare, who was unable not to be too much associated to succeed in this."

—Table Talk, ii. 396. I am not quite sure that I understand this expression; but probably the meaning is not very different from what I have said.

the same passion of jealousy. If, then, we compare these two productions of our greatest comic dramatists, the vast superiority of Shakspeare will appear undeniable. Kately, indeed, has more energy, more relief, more excuse, perhaps, in what might appear, to his temper, matter for jealousy, than the wretched, narrow-minded Ford; he is more of a gentleman, and commands a certain degree of respect: but dramatic justice is better dealt upon Ford by rendering him ridiculous, and he suits better the festive style of Shakspeare's most amusing play. His light-hearted wife, on the other hand, is drawn with more spirit than Dame Kately; and the most ardent admirer of Jonson would not oppose Master Stephen to Slender, or Bobadil to Falstaff. The other characters are not parallel enough to admit of comparison: but in their diversity (nor is Shakspeare perhaps in any one play more fertile) and their amusing peculiarity, as well as in the construction and arrangement of the story, the brilliancy of the wit, the perpetual gayety of the dialogue, we perceive at once to whom the laurel must be given. Nor is this comparison instituted to disparage Jonson, whom we have praised, and shall have again to praise so highly, but to show how much easier it was to vanquish the rest of Europe than to contend with Shakspeare.

40. Measure for Measure, commonly referred to the end of 1603, is perhaps, after Hamlet, Lear, and Macbeth, <sup>Measure for Measure.</sup> the play in which Shakspeare struggles, as it were, most with the over-mastering power of his own mind: the depths and intricacies of being, which he has searched and sounded with intense reflection, perplex and harass him; his personages arrest their course of action to pour forth, in language the most remote from common use, thoughts which few could grasp in the clearest expression; and thus he loses something of dramatic excellence in that of his contemplative philosophy. The Duke is designed as the representative of this philosophical character. He is stern and melancholy by temperament, averse to the exterior shows of power, and secretly conscious of some unfitness for its practical duties. The subject is not very happily chosen, but artfully improved by Shakspeare. In most of the numerous stories of a similar nature, which before or since his time have been related, the sacrifice of chastity is really made, and made in vain. There is, however, something too coarse and disgusting in such a



story; and it would have deprived him of a splendid exhibition of character. The virtue of Isabella, inflexible and independent of circumstance, has something very grand and elevated: yet one is disposed to ask, whether, if Claudio had been really executed, the spectator would not have gone away with no great affection for her; and at least we now feel that her reproaches against her miserable brother, when he clings to life like a frail and guilty being, are too harsh. There is great skill in the invention of Mariana; and, without this, the story could not have had any thing like a satisfactory termination: yet it is never explained how the Duke had become acquainted with this secret, and, being acquainted with it, how he had preserved his esteem and confidence in Angelo. His intention, as hinted towards the end, to marry Isabella, is a little too commonplace: it is one of Shakespeare's hasty half-thoughts. The language of this comedy is very obscure, and the text seems to have been printed with great inaccuracy. I do not value the comic parts highly: Lucio's impudent profligacy, the result rather of sensual debasement than of natural ill disposition, is well represented; but Elbow is a very inferior repetition of Dogberry. In dramatic effect, Measure for Measure ranks high: the two scenes between Isabella and Angelo, that between her and Claudio, those where the Duke appears in disguise, and the catastrophe in the fifth act, are admirably written and very interesting; except so far as the spectator's knowledge of the two stratagems which have deceived Angelo may prevent him from participating in the indignation at Isabella's imaginary wrong, which her lamentations would excite. Several of the circumstances and characters are borrowed from the old play of Whetstone, Promos and Cassandra; but very little of the sentiments or language. What is good in Measure for Measure is Shakespeare's own.

41. If originality of invention did not so much stamp almost every play of Shakspeare that to name one  
 Lear. as the most original seems a disparagement to others, we might say, that this great prerogative of genius was exercised above all in Lear. It diverges more from the model of regular tragedy than Macbeth or Othello, and even more than Hamlet; but the fable is better constructed than in the last of these, and it displays full as much of the almost superhuman inspiration of the poet as the other two. Lear



himself is, perhaps, the most wonderful of dramatic conceptions; ideal to satisfy the most romantic imagination, yet idealized from the reality of nature. Shakspere, in preparing us for the most intense sympathy with this old man, first abuses him to the ground: it is not *Edipus*, against whose respected age the gods themselves have conspired; it is not *Orestes*, noble-minded and affectionate, whose crime has been virtue; it is a headstrong, feeble, and selfish being, whom, in the first act of the tragedy, nothing seems capable of redeeming in our eyes; nothing but what follows, — intense woe, unnatural wrong. Then comes on that splendid madness, not absurdly sudden, as in some tragedies, but in which the strings that keep his reasoning power together give way one after the other in the frenzy of rage and grief. Then it is that we find, what in life may sometimes be seen, the intellectual energies grow stronger in calamity, and especially under wrong. An awful eloquence belongs to unmerited suffering. Thoughts burst out, more profound than Lear in his prosperous hour could ever have conceived; inconsequent, for such is the condition of madness, but in themselves fragments of coherent truth, the reason of an unreasonable mind.

42. Timon of Athens is cast, as it were, in the same mould as Lear: it is the same essential character, the same generosity more from wanton ostentation than love of others, the same fierce rage under the smart of ingratitude, the same rousing up in that tempest of powers that had slumbered unsuspected in some deep recess of the soul; for, had Timon or Lear known that philosophy of human nature in their calmer moments which fury brought forth, they would never have had such terrible occasion to display it. The thoughtless confidence of Lear in his children has something in it far more touching than the self-beggary of Timon; though both one and the other have prototypes enough in real life. And as we give the old king more of our pity, so a more intense abhorrence accompanies his daughters and the evil characters of that drama, than we spare for the miserable sycophants of the Athenian. Their thanklessness is anticipated, and springs from the very nature of their calling: it verges on the beaten road of comedy. In this play there is neither a female personage, except two courtezans, who hardly speak; nor is there any prominent character (the honest steward is not such) redeemed by virtue enough to be estima-

ble; for the cynic Apemantus is but a cynic, and ill replaces the noble Kent of the other drama. The fable, if fable it can be called, is so extraordinarily deficient in action, a fault of which Shakspeare is not guilty in any other instance, that we may wonder a little how he should have seen in the single delineation of Timon a counterbalance for the manifold objections to this subject. But there seems to have been a period of Shakspeare's life when his heart was ill at ease, and ill content with the world or his own conscience; the memory of hours misspent, the pang of affection misplaced or unrequited, the experience of man's worse nature which intercourse with unworthy associates, by choice or circumstance, peculiarly teaches,—these, as they sank down into the depths of his great mind, seem not only to have inspired into it the conception of Lear and Timon, but that of one primary character, the censurer of mankind. This type is first seen in the philosophic melancholy of Jaques, gazing with an undiminished serenity, and with a gayety of fancy, though not of manners, on the follies of the world. It assumes a graver cast in the exiled Duke of the same play, and next one rather more severe in the Duke of Measure for Measure. In all these, however, it is merely contemplative philosophy. In Hamlet this is mingled with the impulses of a perturbed heart under the pressure of extraordinary circumstances; it shines no longer as in the former characters, with a steady light, but plays in fitful coruscations amidst feigned gayety and extravagance. In Lear it is the flash of sudden inspiration across the incongruous imagery of madness; in Timon it is obscured by the exaggerations of misanthropy. These plays all belong to nearly the same period; As You Like It being usually referred to 1600, Hamlet, in its altered form, to about 1602, Timon to the same year, Measure for Measure to 1603, and Lear to 1604. In the later plays of Shakspeare, especially in Macbeth and the Tempest, much of moral speculation will be found; but he has never returned to this type of character in the personages. Timon is less read and less pleasing than the great majority of Shakspeare's plays; but it abounds with signs of his genius. Schlegel observes, that, of all his works, it is that which has most satire; comic in representation of the parasites, indignant and Juvenalian in the bursts of Timon himself.

43. Pericles is generally reckoned to be in part, and only in

part, the work of Shakspeare. From the poverty and bad management of the fable, the want of any effective or distinguishable character (for Marina is no more than Pericles. the common form of female virtue, such as all the dramatists of that age could draw), and a general feebleness of the tragedy as a whole, I should not believe the structure to have been Shakspeare's. But many passages are far more in his manner than in that of any contemporary writer with whom I am acquainted; and the extrinsic testimony, though not conclusive, being of some value, I should not dissent from the judgment of Steevens and Malone, that it was, in no considerable degree, repaired and improved by his touch. Drake has placed it under the year 1590, as the earliest of Shakspeare's plays, for no better reason, apparently, than that he thought it inferior to all the rest. But if, as most will agree, it were not quite his own, this reason will have less weight; and the language seems to me rather that of his second or third manner than of his first. Pericles is not known to have existed before 1609.

44. The majority of readers, I believe, assign to *Macbeth*, which seems to have been written about 1606, the pre-eminence among the works of Shakspeare: many, however, would rather name *Othello*, one of his latest, which is referred to 1611; and a few might prefer *Lear* to either. The great epic drama, as the first may be called, deserves, in my own judgment, the post it has attained; as being, in the language of Drake, "the greatest effort of our author's genius, the most sublime and impressive drama which the world has ever beheld." It will be observed, that Shakspeare had now turned his mind towards the tragic drama. No tragedy but *Romeo and Juliet* belongs to the sixteenth century: ten, without counting *Pericles*, appeared in the first eleven years of the present. It is not my design to distinguish each of his plays separately; and it will be evident that I pass over some of the greatest. No writer, in fact, is so well known as Shakspeare, or has been so abundantly, and, on the whole, so ably criticised: I might have been warranted in saying even less than I have done.

45. Shakspeare was, as I believe, conversant with the better class of English literature which the reign of Elizabeth afforded. Among other books, the translation by North of Anyot's *Plutarch* seems to have fallen into his hands about

1607. It was the source of three tragedies founded on the lives of Brutus, Antony, and Coriolanus; the first bearing the name of Julius Cæsar. In this the plot wants even that historical unity which the romantic drama requires; the third and fourth acts are ill connected; it is deficient in female characters, and in that combination which is generally apparent amidst all the intricacies of his fable. But it abounds in fine scenes and fine passages: the spirit of Plutarch's Brutus is well seized, the predominance of Cæsar himself is judiciously restrained, the characters have that individuality which Shakspeare seldom misses; nor is there, perhaps, in the whole range of ancient and modern eloquence a speech more fully realizing the perfection that orators have striven to attain than that of Antony.

46. Antony and Cleopatra is of rather a different order; Antony and it does not furnish, perhaps, so many striking beauties as the last, but is at least equally redolent of the genius of Shakspeare. Antony, indeed, was given him by history; and he has but embodied in his own vivid colors the irregular mind of the Triumvir, ambitious and daring against all enemies but himself. In Cleopatra he had less to guide him: she is another incarnation of the same passions, more lawless and insensible to reason and honor as they are found in women. This character being not one that can please, its strong and spirited delineation has not been sufficiently observed. It has, indeed, only a poetical originality: the type was in the courtesan of common life; but the resemblance is that of Michael Angelo's Sibyls to a muscular woman. In this tragedy, like Julius Cæsar, as has been justly observed by Schlegel, the events that do not pass on the stage are scarcely made clear enough to one who is not previously acquainted with history, and some of the persons appear and vanish again without sufficient reason. He has, in fact, copied Plutarch too exactly.

47. This fault is by no means discerned in the third Roman tragedy of Shakspeare, — Coriolanus. He luckily found an intrinsic historical unity which he could not have destroyed, and which his magnificent delineation of the chief personage has thoroughly maintained. Coriolanus himself has the grandeur of sculpture: his proportions are colossal; nor would less than this transcendent superiority, by which he towers over his fellow-citizens, warrant, or seem for

The Roman  
tragedies.  
Julius  
Cæsar.

Antony and  
Cleopatra.

Coriolanus.



the moment to warrant, his haughtiness and their pusillanimity. The surprising judgment of Shakspeare is visible in this. A dramatist of the second class (for he alone is in the first), a Corneille, a Schiller, or an Alfieri, would not have lost the occasion of representing the plebeian form of courage and patriotism. A tribune would have been made to utter noble speeches, and some critics would have extolled the balance and contrast of the antagonist principles. And this might have degenerated into the general saws of ethics and politics which philosophical tragedians love to pour forth. But Shakspeare instinctively perceived, that to render the arrogance of Coriolanus endurable to the spectator, or dramatically probable, he must abase the plebeians to a contemptible populace. The sacrifice of historic truth is often necessary for the truth of poetry. The citizens of early Rome, *rusticorum mascula militum proles*, are indeed calumniated in his scenes, and might almost pass for burgesses of Stratford; but the unity of emotion is not dissipated by contradictory energies. Coriolanus is less rich in poetical style than the other two, but the comic parts are full of humor. In these three tragedies it is manifest, that Roman character, and still more Roman manners, are not exhibited with the precision of a scholar; yet there is something that distinguishes them from the rest, something of a *grandiosity* in the sentiments and language, which shows us that Shakspeare had not read that history without entering into its spirit.

48. Othello, or perhaps the Tempest, is reckoned by many the latest of Shakspeare's works. In the zenith of his faculties, in possession of fame disproportionate, indeed, to what has since accrued to his memory, but beyond that of any contemporary, at the age of about forty-seven, he ceased to write, and settled himself at a distance from all dramatic associations in his own native town; a home of which he had never lost sight, nor even permanently quitted, the birthplace of his children, and to which he brought what might then seem affluence in a middle station, with the hope, doubtless, of a secure decline into the yellow leaf of years. But he was cut off in 1616, not probably in the midst of any schemes for his own glory, but to the loss of those enjoyments which he had accustomed himself to value beyond it. His descendants, it is well known, became extinct in little more than half a century.

His retirement and death.



49. The name of Shakspeare is the greatest in our literature, — it is the greatest in all literature. No man ever came near to him in the creative powers of the mind; no man had ever such strength at once, and such variety of imagination. Coleridge has most felicitously applied to him a Greek epithet, given before to I know not whom, certainly none so deserving of it, *μυριάων*, the thousand-souled Shakspeare.<sup>1</sup> The number of characters in his plays is astonishingly great, without reckoning those who, although transient, have often their individuality, all distinct, all types of human life in well-defined differences. Yet he never takes an abstract quality to embody it, scarcely perhaps a definite condition of manners, as Jonson does; nor did he draw much, as I conceive, from living models: there is no manifest appearance of personal caricature in his comedies, though in some slight traits of character this may not improbably have been the case. Above all, neither he nor his contemporaries wrote for the stage in the worst, though most literal, and of late years the most usual, sense; making the servants and handmaids of dramatic invention to lord over it, and limiting the capacities of the poet's mind to those of the performers. If this poverty of the representative department of the drama had hung like an incumbent fiend on the creative power of Shakspeare, how would he have poured forth with such inexhaustible prodigality the vast diversity of characters that we find in some of his plays? This it is in which he leaves far behind not the dramatists alone, but all writers of fiction. Compare with him Homer, the tragedians of Greece, the poets of Italy, Plautus, Cervantes, Molière, Addison, Le Sage, Fielding, Richardson, Scott, the romancers of the elder or later schools, — one man has far more than surpassed them all. Others may have been as sublime, others may have been more pathetic, others may have equalled him in grace and purity of language, and have shunned some of its faults; but the philosophy of Shakspeare, his intimate searching out of the human heart, whether in the gnomic form of sentence or in the dramatic exhibition of character, is a gift peculiarly his own. It is, if not entirely wanting, very little manifested in comparison with him, by the English

<sup>1</sup> Table Talk, vol. II. p. 801. Coleridge had previously spoken of Shakspeare's *eccentric* mind, which, if we take it in the sense of multitudinous unity, *ποικίλων*

*καμάρων ἀντίρροπον γέλασμα*, will present the same idea as *Λεονόρου* in a beautiful image.

dramatists of his own and the subsequent period, whom we are about to approach.

50. These dramatists, as we shall speedily perceive, are hardly less inferior to Shakspeare in judgment. To <sup>his judg-</sup> this quality I particularly advert, because foreign <sup>ment.</sup> writers, and sometimes our own, have imputed an extraordinary barbarism and rudeness to his works. They belong, indeed, to an age sufficiently rude and barbarous in its entertainments, and are of course to be classed with what is called the romantic school, which has hardly yet shaken off that reproach. But no one who has perused the plays anterior to those of Shakspeare, or contemporary with them, or subsequent to them, down to the closing of the theatres in the civil war, will pretend to deny that there is far less regularity, in regard to every thing where regularity can be desired, in a large proportion of these (perhaps in all the tragedies) than in his own. We need only repeat the names of the Merchant of Venice, Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Othello, the Merry Wives of Windsor, Measure for Measure. The plots in these are excellently constructed, and in some with uncommon artifice. But, even where an analysis of the story might excite criticism, there is generally an unity of interest which tones the whole. The Winter's Tale is not a model to follow; but we feel that the Winter's Tale is a single story: it is even managed as such with consummate skill. It is another proof of Shakspeare's judgment, that he has given action enough to his comedies, without the bustling intricacy of the Spanish stage. If his plots have any little obscurity in some parts, it is from copying his novel or history too minutely.

51. The idolatry of Shakspeare has been carried so far of late years, that Drake and perhaps greater authorities have been unwilling to acknowledge any faults in his plays. This, however, is an extravagance rather derogatory to the critic than honorable to the poet. Besides the blemishes of construction in some of his plots, which are pardonable, but still blemishes, there are too many in his style. His conceits and quibbles often spoil the effect of his scenes, and take off from the passion he would excite. In the last act of Richard II., the Duke of York is introduced demanding the punishment of his son Aumale for a conspiracy against the king, while the Duchess implores mercy. The scene is ill conceived and worse executed throughout; but one line is both atrocious

and contemptible. The Duchess having dwelt on the word *pardon*, and urged the king to let her hear it from his lips, York takes her up with this stupid quibble:—

“Speak it in French, King; say, Pardonnez-moi.”

It would not be difficult to find several other instances, though none, perhaps, quite so bad, of verbal equivocations, misplaced and inconsistent with the person's, the author's, the reader's sentiment.

52. Few will defend these notorious faults. But is there not one, less frequently mentioned, yet of more continual recurrence,—the extreme obscurity of Shakspeare's diction? His style is full of new words and new senses. It is easy to pass this over as obsolescence: but though many expressions are obsolete, and many provincial; though the labor of his commentators has never been so profitably, as well as so diligently, employed as in tracing this by the help of the meanest and most forgotten books of the age,—it is impossible to deny, that innumerable lines in Shakspeare were not more intelligible in his time than they are at present. Much of this may be forgiven, or rather is so incorporated with the strength of his reason and fancy, that we love it as the proper body of Shakspeare's soul. Still, can we justify the very numerous passages which yield to no interpretation, knots which are never unloosed, which conjecture does but cut, or even those which, if they may at last be understood, keep the attention in perplexity till the first emotion has passed away? And these occur not merely in places where the struggles of the speaker's mind may be well denoted by some obscurities of language, as in the soliloquies of Hamlet and Macbeth, but in dialogues between ordinary personages, and in the business of the play. We learn Shakspeare, in fact, as we learn a language, or as we read a difficult passage in Greek, with the eye glancing on the commentary; and it is only after much study that we come to forget a part, it can be but a part, of the perplexities he has caused us. This was no doubt one reason that he was less read formerly; his style passing for obsolete, though in many parts, as we have just said, it was never much more intelligible than it is.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Shakspeare's style is so pestered with figurative expressions that it is as affected as it is obscure. It is true that in his later plays he had worn off somewhat of this rust.” — Dryden's Works (Malone), vol. II.

part II. p. 252. This is by no means the truth, but rather the reverse of it. Dryden knew not at all which were earlier, or which later, of Shakspeare's plays.

53. It does not appear probable, that Shakspeare was ever placed below, or merely on a level with, the other dramatic writers of this period.<sup>1</sup> That his plays were not so frequently represented as those of Fletcher, is little to the purpose: they required a more expensive decoration, a larger company of good performers, and, above all, they were less intelligible to a promiscuous audience. Yet it is certain, that throughout the seventeenth century, and even in the writings of Addison and his contemporaries, we seldom or never meet with that complete recognition of his supremacy, that unhesitating preference of him to all the world, which has become the faith of the last and the present century. And it is remarkable, that this apotheosis, so to speak, of Shakspeare, was originally the work of what has been styled a frigid and tasteless generation, the age of George II. Much is certainly due to the stage itself, when those appeared who could guide and control the public taste, and discover that in the poet himself which sluggish imaginations could not have reached. The enthusiasm for Shakspeare is nearly coincident with that for Garrick: it was kept up by his followers, and especially by that highly gifted family which has but recently been withdrawn from our stage.

54. Among the commentators on Shakspeare, Warburton, always striving to display his own acuteness, and scorn of others, deviates more than any one else from the meaning. Theobald was the first who did a little. Johnson explained much well; but there is something magisterial in the manner wherein he dismisses each play like a boy's exercise, that irritates the reader. His criticism is frequently judicious, but betrays no ardent admiration for Shakspeare. Malone and Steevens were two laborious com-

<sup>1</sup> A certain William Cartwright, in commendatory verses addressed to Fletcher, has the assurance to say, —

"Shakspeare to thee was dull, whose best  
writ lies

I th' ladies' questions and the fools'  
replies."

But the suffrage of Jonson himself, of Milton, and of many more that might be quoted, tends to prove that his genius was esteemed beyond that of any other, though some might compare inferior writers to him in certain qualifications of the dramatist. Even Dryden, who came in a worse period, and had no undue reverence

for Shakspeare, admits that "he was the man who, of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes any thing, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning give him the greater commendation; he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read Nature; he looked inward, and found her there." — Dryden's *Præface* Works (Malone's edition), vol. I. part II. p. 69.



mentators on the meaning of words and phrases; one dull, the other clever: but the dullness was accompanied by candor and a love of truth; the cleverness, by a total absence of both. Neither seems to have had a full discernment of Shakspeare's genius. The numerous critics of the last age who were not editors have poured out much that is trite and insipid, much that is hypercritical and erroneous; yet collectively they not only bear witness to the public taste for the poet, but taught men to judge and feel more accurately than they would have done for themselves. Hurd and Lord Kaimes, especially the former, may be reckoned among the best of this class;<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Montagu, perhaps, in her celebrated Essay, not very far from the bottom of the list. In the present century, Coleridge and Schlegel, so nearly at the same time that the question of priority and even plagiarism has been mooted, gave a more philosophical, and at the same time a more intrinsically exact, view of Shakspeare than their predecessors. What has since been written has often been highly acute and æsthetic, but occasionally with an excess of refinement which substitutes the critic for the work. Mrs. Jameson's Essays on the Female Characters of Shakspeare are among the best. It was right that this province of illustration should be reserved for a woman's hand.

55. Ben Jonson, so generally known by that familiar description that some might hardly recognize him Ben Jonson. without it, was placed next to Shakspeare by his own age. They were much acquainted, and belonged to the oldest, perhaps, and not the worst of clubs, formed by Sir Walter Raleigh about the beginning of the century, which met at the Mermaid in Friday Street. We may easily believe the testimony of one of its members, that it was a feast of the most subtle and brilliant wit.<sup>2</sup> Jonson had abundant powers of poignant and sarcastic humor, besides extensive reading; and Shakspeare must have brought to the Mermaid the brightness of his fancy. Selden and Camden, the former in early youth, are reported to have given the ballast of their strong sense

<sup>1</sup> Hurd, in his notes on Horace's Art of Poetry, vol. i. p. 52, has some very good remarks on the diction of Shakspeare, suggested by the *callida junctura* of the Roman poet, illustrated by many instances. These remarks both serve to bring out the skill of Shakspeare, and to explain the disputed passage in Horace. Hurd justly

maintains the obvious construction of that passage: "Notum ac callida verbum Reddidit junctura novum." That proposed by Lambius and Bættle, which begins with *numum*, is inadmissible, and gives a worse sense.

<sup>2</sup> Clifford's Life of Jonson, p. 65; Collins, III. 275



and learning to this cluster of poets. There has been, however, a prevalent tradition that Jonson was not without some malignant and envious feelings towards Shakspeare. Gifford has repelled this imputation with considerable success, though we may still suspect that there was something caustic and saturnine in the temper of Jonson.

56. The Alchemist is a play which long remained on the stage, though I am not sure that it has been represented since the days of Garrick, who was famous in The Alchemist. Abel Drugger. Notwithstanding the indiscriminate and injudicious panegyric of Gifford, I believe there is no reader of taste but will condemn the outrageous excess of pedantry with which the first acts of this play abound; pedantry the more intolerable, that it is not even what, however unfit for the English stage, scholars might comprehend, but the gibberish of obscure treatises on alchemy, which, whatever the commentators may choose to say, was as unintelligible to all but a few half-witted dupes of that imposture as it is at present. Much of this, it seems impossible to doubt, was omitted in representation. Nor is his pedantic display of learning confined to the part of the Alchemist, who had certainly a right to talk in the style of his science, if he had done it with some moderation. Sir Epicure Mammon, a worldly sensualist, placed in the author's own age, pours out a torrent of gluttonous cookery from the kitchens of Heliogabalus and Apicius: his dishes are to be camels' heels, the beards of barbels and dissolved pearl, crowning all with the paps of a sow. But, while this habitual error of Jonson's vanity is not to be overlooked, we may truly say, that it is much more than compensated by the excellences of this comedy. The plot, with great simplicity, is continually animated and interesting; the characters are conceived and delineated with admirable boldness, truth, spirit, and variety: the humor, especially in the two Puritans, a sect who now began to do penance on the stage, is amusing; the language, when it does not smell too much of book-learning, is forcible and clear. The Alchemist is one of the three plays which usually contest the superiority among those of Jonson.

57. The second of these is The Fox, which, according to general opinion, has been placed above the Alchemist, or Volpone, or The Fox. Notwithstanding the dissent of Gifford, I should concur in this suffrage. The fable belongs to a higher

class of comedy. Without minutely inquiring whether the Roman hunters after the inheritance of the rich, so well described by Horace, and especially the costly presents by which they endeavored to secure a better return, are altogether according to the manners of Venice, where Jonson has laid his scene, we must acknowledge, that he has displayed the base cupidity, of which there will never be wanting examples among mankind, in such colors as all other dramatic poetry can hardly rival. Cumberland has blamed the manner in which Volpone brings ruin on his head by insulting, in disguise, those whom he had duped. In this, I agree with Gifford, there is no violation of nature. Besides their ignorance of his person, so that he could not necessarily foresee the effects of Voltore's rage, it has been well and finely said by Cumberland, that there is a moral in a villain's outwitting himself. And this is one that many dramatists have displayed.

58. In the choice of subject, *The Fox* is much inferior to *Tartuffe*, to which it bears some very general analogy. Though the *Tartuffe* is not a remarkably agreeable play, *The Fox* is much less so: five of the principal characters are wicked almost beyond any retribution that comedy can dispense; the smiles it calls forth are not those of gayety, but scorn; and the parts of an absurd English knight and his wife, though very humorous, are hardly prominent enough to enliven the scenes of guilt and fraud which pass before our eyes. But, though too much pedantry obtrudes itself, it does not overspread the pages with nonsense as in the *Alchemist*; the characters of Celia and Bonario excite some interest; the differences, one can hardly say the gradations, of villainy are marked with the strong touches of Jonson's pen; the incidents succeed rapidly and naturally; the dramatic effect, above all, is perceptible to every reader, and rises in a climax through the last two acts to the conclusion.

59. *The Silent Woman*, which has been named by some with the *Alchemist* and the *Fox*, falls much below them in vigorous delineation and dramatic effect. It has more diversity of manner than of character; the amusing scenes border sometimes on farce, as where two cowardly knights are made to receive blows in the dark, each supposing them to come from his adversary; and the catastrophe is neither pleasing nor probable. It is written with a great deal

of spirit, and has a value as the representation of London life in the higher ranks at that time. But, upon the whole, I should be inclined to give to Every Man in his Humor a much superior place. It is a proof of Jonson's extensive learning, that the story of this play, and several particular passages, have been detected in a writer so much out of the beaten track as Libanius.<sup>1</sup>

60. The pastoral drama of the Sad Shepherd is the best testimony to the poetical imagination of Jonson. Superior in originality, liveliness, and beauty to the Faithful Shepherdess of Fletcher, it reminds us rather, in language and imagery, of the Midsummer Night's Dream; and perhaps no other poetry has come so near to that of Shakespeare. Jonson, like him, had an extraordinary command of English, in its popular and provincial idioms, as well as what might be gained from books; and, though his invincible pedantry now and then obtrudes itself into the mouths of shepherds, it is compensated by numerous passages of the most natural and graceful expression. This beautiful drama is imperfect, hardly more than half remaining, or, more probably, having ever been written. It was also Jonson's last song: age and poverty had stolen upon him; but, as one has said who experienced the same destiny, "the life was in the leaf," and his laurel remained verdant amidst the snow of his honored head. The beauties of the Sad Shepherd might be reckoned rather poetical than dramatic; yet the action is both diversified and interesting to a degree we seldom find in the pastoral drama: there is little that is low in the comic speeches, nothing that is inflated in the serious.

61. Two men once united by friendship, and for ever by fame, the Dioscouri of our zodiac, Beaumont and Fletcher, rose upon the horizon, as the star of Shakespeare, though still in its fullest brightness, was declining in the sky. The first in order of time, among more than fifty plays published with their joint names, is the Woman-Hater, represented, according to Langbaine, in 1607,

Sad Shepherd.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

<sup>1</sup> Gifford discovered this. Dryden, who has given an examination of the Silent Woman, in his Essay on Dramatic Poetry, takes Morose for a real character, and says that he had so been informed. It is possible that there might be some foundation of truth in this: the skeleton is in Libanius, but Jonson may have filled it

up from the life. Dryden gives it as his opinion that there is more wit and sententiousness of fancy in this play than in any of Ben Jonson's, and that he has described the conversation of gentlemen with more gaiety and freedom than in the rest of his comedies, p. 107.

and ascribed to Beaumont alone by Seward, though, I believe, merely on conjecture.<sup>1</sup> Beaumont died at the age of thirty, in 1615; Fletcher, in 1625. No difference of manner is perceptible, or at least no critic has perceived any, in the plays that appeared between these two epochs: in fact, the greater part were not printed till 1647, and it is only through the records of the play-house that we distinguish their dates. The tradition, however, of their own times, as well as the earlier death of Beaumont, give us reason to name Fletcher, when we mention one singly, as the principal author of all these plays: and of late years this has perhaps become more customary than it used to be. A contemporary copy of verses, indeed, seems to attribute the greater share in the *Maid's Tragedy*, *Philaster*, and *King and No King*, to Beaumont. But testimony of this kind is very precarious. It is sufficient that he bore a part in these three.

92. Of all our early dramatic poets, none have suffered such mangling by the printer as Beaumont and Fletcher. Their style is generally elliptical, and not very perspicuous: they use words in peculiar senses; and there seems often an attempt at pointed expression, in which its meaning has deserted them. But, after every effort to comprehend their language, it is continually so remote from all possibility of bearing a rational sense, that we can only have recourse to one hypothesis, — that of an extensive and irreparable corruption of the text. Seward and Simpson, who, in 1750, published the first edition in which any endeavor was made at illustration or amendment, though not men of much taste, and too fond of extolling their authors, showed some acuteness, and have restored many passages in a probable manner, though often driven out at sea to conjecture something, where the received reading furnished not a vestige which they could trace. No one since has made any great progress in this criticism, though some have carped at these editors for not performing more. The problem of

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I. p. 3. He also thinks *The Nine Years' Peace* exclusively Beaumont's. These two appear to me about the worst in the collection.

The worst editor of Beaumont and Fletcher is inclined to modify this opinion, chiefly prevalent, as to the respective shares of the two poets. *The Woman-Hater* he thinks, was "in all probability the

unassisted composition of Beaumont." On the other hand, he says, "not the slightest doubt can be entertained, indeed the earlier plays in the present collection (and among these plays are the best, Beaumont contributed a large perhaps the weightier portion." — *Some Account of the Lives and Writings of Beaumont and Fletcher*, prefixed to Mr. Dyce's edition. — 1825.

actual restoration in most places, where the printers or transcribers have made such strange havoc, must evidently be insoluble.<sup>1</sup>

63. The first play in the collected works of Beaumont and Fletcher, though not the earliest, is the *Maid's Tragedy*; and it is among the best. None of their female characters, though they are often very successful in beautiful delineations of virtuous love, attaches our sympathy like *Aspasia*. Her sorrows are so deep, so pure, so unmerited; she sustains the breach of plighted faith in *Amyntor*, and the taunts of vicious women, with so much resignation, so little of that termagant resentment which these poets are apt to infuse into their heroines; the poetry of her speeches is so exquisitely imaginative,—that, of those dramatic persons who are not prominent in the development of a story, scarce any, even in Shakspeare, are more interesting. Nor is the praise due to the *Maid's Tragedy* confined to the part of *Aspasia*. In *Melantius* we have Fletcher's favorite character, the brave, honest soldier, incapable of suspecting evil till it becomes impossible to be ignorant of it, but unshrinking in its punishment. That of *Evadne* well displays the audacious security of guilt under the safeguard of power: it is highly theatrical, and renders the success of this tragedy not surprising in times when its language and situations could be endured by the audience. We may remark in this tragedy, as in many others of these dramatists, that, while pouring out the unlimited loyalty fashionable at the court of James, they are full of implied satire, which could hardly escape observation. The warm eulogies on military glory, the scorn of slothful peace, the pictures of dissolute baseness in courtiers, seem to spring from a sentiment very usual among the English gentry, a rank to which they both belonged, of dislike to that ignominious government; and, though James was far enough removed from such voluptuous tyrants as Fletcher has portrayed in this and some other plays, they did not serve to exemplify the advantages of monarchy in the most attractive manner.

64. The *Maid's Tragedy*, unfortunately, beautiful and essentially moral as it is, cannot be called a tragedy for mounds, and indeed should hardly be read by any respecta-

<sup>1</sup> [The recent edition of Mr. Dyce has gone far towards a restoration of the genuine text. — 1847.]



ble woman. It abounds with that studiously protracted indecency which distinguished Fletcher beyond all our early dramatists, and is so much incorporated with his plays, that very few of them can be so altered as to become tolerable at present on the stage. In this he is strikingly contrasted with Shakspeare, whose levities of this kind are so transitory, and so much confined to language, that he has borne the process of purification with little detriment to his genius, or even to his wit.

65. *Philaster* has been, in its day, one of the best known and most popular of Fletcher's plays.<sup>1</sup> This was owing to the pleasing characters of *Philaster* and *Bellario*, and to the frequent sweetness of the poetry. It is nevertheless, not a first-rate play. The plot is most absurdly managed. It turns on the suspicion of *Arethusa's* infidelity; and the sole ground of this is, that an abandoned woman, being detected herself, accuses the princess of unchastity. Not a shadow of presumptive evidence is brought to confirm this impudent assertion; which, however, the lady's father, her lover, and a grave, sensible courtier, do not fail implicitly to believe. How unlike the chain of circumstance, and the devilish cunning, by which the Moor is wrought up to think his *Desdemona* false! *Bellario* is suggested by *Viola*; there is more picturesqueness, more dramatic importance, not perhaps more beauty and sweetness of affection, but a more eloquent development of it, in Fletcher: on the other hand, there is still more of that improbability which attends a successful concealment of sex by mere disguise of clothes, though no artifice has been more common on the stage. Many other circumstances in the conduct of Fletcher's story are ill contrived. It has less wit than the greater part of his comedies; for among such, according to the old distinction, it is to be ranked, though the subject is elevated and serious.

66. *King and No King* is, in my judgment, inferior to *Philaster*. The language has not so much of poetical beauty. The character of *Arbaces* excites no sympathy: it is a compound of vain-glory and violence, which

<sup>1</sup> Dryden says, but I know not how truly, that *Philaster* was "the first play that brought Beaumont and Fletcher in esteem; for, before that, they had written two or three very unsuccessfully."—

p. 100. *Philaster* was not printed, according to Langbaine, till 1620: I do not know that we have any evidence of the date of its representation.

rather demands disgrace from poetical justice than reward. Panthen is innocent, but insipid; Mardonius, a good specimen of what Fletcher loves to exhibit, the plain, honest courtier. As for Bessus, he certainly gives occasion to several amusing scenes; but his cowardice is a little too glaring: he is neither so laughable as Bobadil, nor so sprightly as Parolles. The principal merit of this play, which rendered it popular on the stage for many years, consists in the effective scenes where Arbaces reveals his illicit desire. That especially with Mardonius is artfully and elaborately written. Shakspeare had less of this skill; and his tragedies suffer for it in their dramatic effect. The scene between John and Hubert is an exception, and there is a great deal of it in *Othello*; but, in general, he may be said not to have exerted the power of detaining the spectator in that anxious suspense, which creates almost an actual illusion, and makes him tremble at every word, lest the secret which he has learned should be imparted to the imaginary person on the stage. Of this there are several fine instances in the Greek tragedians, the famous scene in the *Œdipus Tyrannus* being the best; and it is possible that the superior education of Fletcher may have rendered him familiar with the resources of ancient tragedy. These scenes in the present play would have been more highly powerful, if the interest could have been thrown on any character superior to the selfish braggart Arbaces. It may be said, perhaps, that his humiliation through his own lawless passions, after so much insolence of success, affords a moral: he seems, however, but imperfectly cured at the conclusion, which is also hurried on with unsatisfactory rapidity.

67. The Elder Brother has been generally reckoned among the best of Fletcher's comedies. It displays in a new form an idea not very new in fiction: the power of love, on the first sight of a woman, to vivify a soul utterly ignorant of the passion. Charles, the Elder Brother, much unlike the Cymon of Dryden, is absorbed in study; a mere scholar without a thought beyond his books. His indifference, perhaps, and ignorance about the world, are rather exaggerated, and border on stupidity; but it was the custom of the dramatists in that age to produce effect in representation by very sudden developments, if not changes, of character. The other persons are not ill-conceived: the honest, testy Miramont, who admires learning without much more of it than

enables him to sign his name; the two selfish, worldly fathers of Charles and Angelina, believing themselves shrewd, yet the easy dupes of coxcomb manners from the court; the spirited Angelina; the spoiled but not worthless Eustace,—show Fletcher's great talent in dramatic invention. In none of his mere comedies has he sustained so uniformly elegant and pleasing a style of poetry: the language of Charles is naturally that of a refined scholar; but now and then, perhaps, we find old Miramont talk above himself. The underplot hits to the life the licentious endeavors of an old man to seduce his inferior; but, as usual, it reveals vice too broadly. This comedy is of very simple construction, so that Cibber was obliged to blend it with another, *The Custom of the Country*, in order to compose from the two his *Love Makes a Man*; by no means the worst play of that age. The two plots, however, do not harmonize very well.

68. *The Spanish Curate* is, in all probability, taken from one of those comedies of intrigue which the fame of Lope de Vega had made popular in Europe.<sup>1</sup> It is one of the best specimens of that manner: the plot is full of incident and interest, without being difficult of comprehension, nor, with fair allowance for the conventions of the stage and manners of the country, improbable. The characters are in full relief, without caricature. Fletcher, with an artifice of which he is very fond, has made the fierce resentment of Violante break out unexpectedly from the calmness she had shown in the first scenes; but it is so well accounted for, that we see nothing unnatural in the development of passions for which there had been no previous call. Ascanio is again one of Fletcher's favorite delineations; a kind of Bellario in his modest, affectionate disposition; one in whose prosperity the reader takes so much pleasure, that he forgets it is, in a worldly sense, inconsistent with that of the honest-hearted Don Jamie. The doting husband, Don Henrique, contrasts well with the jealous Bartolus; and both afford by their fate the sort of moral which is looked for in comedy. The underplot of the lawyer and his wife, while it shows how licentious in principle as well as indecent in language the stage had become, is conducted with incomparable humor and amusement. Con-

<sup>1</sup> [*The Spanish Curate*, Mr. Dyce informs us, is founded on *Gerardo, the Unfortunate Spaniard*, a novel by Gonzalo de Cephalos, of which an English translation, by Leonard Digges, appeared in 1622.—1847.]

greve borrowed part of this in the Old Bachelor, without by any means equalling it. Upon the whole, as a comedy of this class, it deserves to be placed in the highest rank.

69. The Custom of the Country is much deformed by obscenity, especially the first act. But it is full of nobleness in character and sentiment, of interesting situations, of unceasing variety of action. Fletcher has never shown what he so much delights in drawing, — the contrast of virtuous dignity with ungoverned passion in woman, — with more success than in Zenobia and Hippolyta. Of these three plays we may say, perhaps, that there is more poetry in the Elder Brother, more interest in the Custom of the Country, more wit and spirit in the Spanish Curate.

*The Custom  
of the  
Country.*

70. The Loyal Subject ought also to be placed in a high rank among the works of Beaumont and Fletcher. There is a play by Heywood, The Royal King and Loyal Subject, from which the general idea of several circumstances of this has been taken. That Heywood's was the original, though the only edition of it is in 1637, while the Loyal Subject was represented in 1618, cannot bear a doubt. The former is expressly mentioned in the epilogue as an old play, belonging to a style gone out of date, and not to be judged with rigor. Heywood has therefore the praise of having conceived the character of Earl Marshal, upon which Fletcher somewhat improved in Archaas; a brave soldier, of that disinterested and devoted loyalty which bears all ingratitude and outrage at the hands of an unworthy and misguided sovereign. In the days of James, there could be no more courtly moral. In each play, the prince, after depriving his most deserving subject of honors and fortune, tries his fidelity by commanding him to send two daughters, whom he had educated in seclusion, to the court, with designs that the father may easily suspect. The loyalty, however, of these honest soldiers submits to encounter this danger; and the conduct of the young ladies soon proves that they might be trusted in the fiery trial. In the Loyal Subject, Fletcher has beautifully, and with his light touch of pencil, sketched the two virtuous sisters: one high-spirited, intrepid, undisguised; the other shrinking with maiden modesty, a tremulous dew-drop in the cup of a violet. But, unfortunately, his original taint betrays itself, and the elder sister cannot display her scorn of licentiousness without borrowing some of its language. If Shak-

*The Loyal  
Subject.*



speare had put these loose images into the mouth of Isabella, how differently we should have esteemed her character!

71. We find in the Loyal Subject what is neither pleasing nor probable, the disguise of a youth as a girl. This was, of course, not offensive to those who saw nothing else on the stage. Fletcher did not take this from Heywood. In the whole management of the story he is much superior: the nobleness of Archas, and his injuries, are still more displayed than those of the Earl Marshal; and he has several new characters, especially Theodore, the impetuous son of the Loyal Subject, who does not brook the insults of a prince as submissively as his father, which fill the play with variety and spirit. The language is in some places obscure and probably corrupt, but abounding with that kind of poetry which belongs to Fletcher.

72. *Beggar's Bush* is an excellent comedy; the serious parts interesting, the comic diverting. Every character supports itself well: if some parts of the plot have been suggested by *As You Like It*, they are managed so as to be original in spirit. Few of Fletcher's plays furnish more proofs of his characteristic qualities. It might be represented with no great curtailment.

73. *The Scornful Lady* is one of those comedies which exhibit English domestic life, and have therefore a value independent of their dramatic merit. It does not equal *Beggar's Bush*, but is full of effective scenes, which, when less regard was paid to decency, must have rendered it a popular play. Fletcher, in fact, is as much superior to Shakspeare in his knowledge of the stage, as he falls below him in that of human nature.<sup>1</sup> His fertile invention was

<sup>1</sup> [Mr. Dyce, as well as an earlier editor of Beaumont and Fletcher, thinks the greater part of this comedy written by Beaumont. Mr. Dyce adds: "In the edition of 1750, Theobald has a note concerning the steward Savil, where he says, 'The ingenious Mr. Addison, I remember, told me that he sketched out his character of Vellum, in the comedy called the Drummer, purely from this model.'" It is said of some plagiarists, that they are like gnomes, who steal children, and disfigure them that they may not be known. "The Ingenious Mr. Addison" went another way to work: when he took any one's silver, he turned it into gold. I doubt whether Theobald reported his ingenious friend's words rightly; for the inimitable formality of Vellum has no prototype in

Savil. But, while making this avowal, why did not he add, that the Waiting-Woman in the *Scornful Lady* is called Abigail? Here was a heinous theft; and, after his concealment, I fear that we must refuse absolution. After all, however, there is a certain resemblance in these comedies, which may lead us to believe that Addison had his predecessors in his head. Since this was written, I have observed that Mr. Dyce, in *Some Account of the Lives and Writings of Beaumont and Fletcher*, prefixed to his edition, p. 41, has remarks to the same purport. Mr. Dyce adds, that when "the Spectator and Tatler are hastening to oblivion" (*pudet hoc opprobria*), "it cannot be expected that the reader will know much of The Drummer." — 1847.]



turned to the management of his plot (always with a view to representation), the rapid succession of incidents, the surprises and embarrassments which keep the spectator's attention alive. His characters are but vehicles to the story: they are distinguished, for the most part, by little more than the slight peculiarities of manner, which are easily caught by the audience; and we do not often meet, especially in his comedies, with the elaborate delineations of Jonson, or the marked idiosyncrasies of Shakspeare. Of these, his great predecessors, one formed a deliberate conception of a character, whether taken from general nature or from manners, and drew his figure, as it were, in his mind, before he transferred it to the canvas: with the other, the idea sprang out of the depths of his soul, and, though suggested by the story he had chosen, became so much the favorite of his genius as he wrote, that in its development he sometimes grew negligent of his plot.

74. No tragedy of Fletcher would deserve higher praise than *Valentinian*, if he had not, by an inconceivable want of taste and judgment, descended from *Valentinian*. beauty and dignity to the most preposterous absurdities. The untrouled purity of the injured Lucina, the ravages of unrestrained self-indulgence on a mind not wholly without glimpses of virtue in *Valentinian*, the vileness of his courtiers, the spirited contrast of unconquerable loyalty in *Ætius*, with the natural indignation at wrong in *Maximus*, are brought before our eyes in some of Fletcher's best poetry, though in a text that seems even more corrupt than usual. But after the admirable scene in the third act, where Lucina (the *Lucretia* of this story) reveals her injury, — perhaps almost the only scene in this dramatist, if we except the *Maid's Tragedy*, that can move us to tears, — her husband *Maximus*, who even here begins to forfeit our sympathy by his ready consent, in the Spanish style of perverted honor, to her suicide, becomes a treacherous and ambitious villain, the loyalty of *Ætius* turns to downright folly, and the rest of the play is but such a series of murders as Marston or the author of *Andronicus* might have devised. If Fletcher meant, which he very probably did, to inculcate as a moral, that the worst of tyrants are to be obeyed with unflinching submission, he may have gained applause at court, at the expense of his reputation with posterity.

75. The Two Noble Kinsmen is a play that has been honored by a tradition of Shakspeare's concern in it. The evidence as to this is the titlepage of the first edition; which, though it may seem much at first sight, is next to nothing in our old drama, full of misnomers of this kind. The editors of Beaumont and Fletcher have insisted upon what they take for marks of Shakspeare's style; and Schlegel, after "seeing no reason for doubting so probable an opinion," detects the spirit of Shakspeare in a certain ideal purity which distinguishes this from other plays of Fletcher, and in the conscientious fidelity with which it follows the Knight's Tale in Chaucer. The Two Noble Kinsmen has much of that elevated sense of honor, friendship, fidelity, and love, which belongs, I think, more characteristically to Fletcher, who had drunk at the fountain of Castilian romance, than to one in whose vast mind this conventional morality of particular classes was subordinated to the universal nature of man. In this sense, Fletcher is always, in his tragic compositions, a very ideal poet. The subject itself is fitter for him than for Shakspeare. In the language and conduct of this play, with great deference to better and more attentive critics, I see imitations of Shakspeare rather than such resemblances as denote his powerful stamp. The madness of the gaoler's daughter, where some have imagined they saw the master-hand, is doubtless suggested by that of Ophelia, but with an inferiority of taste and feeling which it seems impossible not to recognize. The painful and degrading symptom of female insanity, which Shakspeare has touched with his gentle hand, is dwelt upon by Fletcher with all his innate impurity. Can any one believe that the former would have written the last scene in which the gaoler's daughter appears on the stage? Schlegel has too fine taste to believe that this character came from Shakspeare, and it is given up by the latest assessor of his claim to a participation in the play.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The author of a "Letter on Shakspeare's Authorship of the Drama entitled the Two Noble Kinsmen," Edinburgh, 1883, notwithstanding this title, does not deny a considerable participation to Fletcher. He lays no great stress on the external evidence. But, in arguing from the similarity of style to many passages to that of Shakspeare, the author, Mr. Spalding of Edinburgh, shows so much taste and so competent a knowledge of the two dramatists, that I should perhaps scruple

to set up my own doubts in opposition. His chief proofs are drawn from the force and condensation of language in particular passages, which doubtless is one of the great distinctions between the two. But we might wish to have seen this displayed in longer extracts than such as the author of this Letter has generally given us. It is difficult to say of a man like Fletcher, that he could not have written single lines in the spirit of his predecessor. A few instances, however of longer passages will

76. The Faithful Shepherdess, deservedly among the most celebrated productions of Fletcher, stands alone in its class, and admits of no comparison with any other play. It is a pastoral drama, in imitation of the Pastor Fido, at that time very popular in England. The Faithful Shepherdess, however, to the great indignation of all the poets, did not succeed on its first representation. There is nothing in this surprising: the tone of pastoral is too far removed from the possibilities of life for a stage, which appealed, like ours, to the boisterous sympathies of a general audience. It is a play very characteristic of Fletcher, being a mixture of tenderness, purity, indecency, and absurdity. There is some justice in Schlegel's remark, that it is an immodest eulogy on modesty. But this critic, who does not seem to appreciate the beauty of Fletcher's poetry, should hardly have mentioned Guarini as a model whom he might have followed. It was by copying the Corisca of the Pastor Fido that Fletcher introduced the character of the vicious shepherdess Cloe; though, according to his times, and we must own, to his disposition, he has greatly aggravated the faults to which just exception has been taken in his original.

The Faithful Shepherdess.

77. It is impossible to withhold our praise from the poetical beauties of this pastoral drama. Every one knows that it contains the germ of Comus: the benevolent Satyr, whose last proposition to "stray in the middle air, and stay the sailing rack, or nimbly take hold of the moon," is not much in the character of those sylvans, has been judiciously metamorphosed by Milton to an attendant spirit; and a more austere as well as more uniform language has been given to the speakers. But Milton has borrowed largely from the imagination of his predecessor; and, by quoting the lyric parts of the Faithful Shepherdess, it would be easy to deceive any one not accurately familiar with the songs of Comus. They abound with that rapid succession of ideal scenery, that darting of the poet's fancy from earth to heaven, those picturesque and novel metaphors, which distinguish much of the poetry of this age,

be found; and I believe that it is a subject upon which there will long be a difference of opinion.

[Coleridge has said, "I have no doubt whatever, that the first act and the first scene of the second act of the Two Noble Minstrels, are Shakespeare's."—Table Talk, vol. II p 119 — 1842.]

[Mr. Dyce concurs with Mr. Spalding as to the share of Shakespeare, which they both think to have been the first, and a part, if not all, of the fifth, but not much of the intermediate parts. The hypothesis of a joint production is open to much difficulty, which Mr. Dyce hardly removes — 1847.]

and which are ultimately, perhaps, in great measure referable to Shakspeare.

78. *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* is among the superior comedies of its class. That it has a prototype on the Spanish theatre must appear likely; but I should be surprised if the variety and spirit of character, the vivacity of humor, be not chiefly due to our own authors.<sup>1</sup> Every personage in this comedy is drawn with a vigorous pencil; so that it requires a good company to be well represented. It is indeed a mere picture of roguery; for even Leon, the only character for whom we can feel any sort of interest, has gained his ends by stratagem: but his gallant spirit redeems this in our indulgent views of dramatic morality, and we are justly pleased with the discomfiture of fraud and effrontery in Estifania and Margarita.

79. *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* is very diverting, and more successful, perhaps, than any previous attempt to introduce a drama within a drama. I should hardly except the Introduction to the Taming of a Shrew. The burlesque, though very ludicrous, does not transgress all bounds of probability. The Wild-geese Chase, The Chances, The Humorous Lieutenant, Women Pleased, Wit without Money, Monsieur Thomas, and several other comedies, deserve to be praised for the usual excellences of Fletcher, — his gayety, his invention, his ever-varying rapidity of dialogue and incident. None are without his defects; and we may add, what is not in fairness to be called a defect of his, since it applies perhaps to every dramatic writer except Shakspeare and Molière, that, being cast as it were in a common mould, we find both a monotony in reading several of these plays, and a difficulty of distinguishing them in remembrance.

80. The later writers, those especially after the Restoration, did not fail to appropriate many of the inventions of Fletcher. He and his colleague are the proper founders of our comedy of intrigue, which prevailed through the seventeenth century; the comedy of Wycherley, Dryden, Behn, and Shadwell. Their manner, if not their actual plots, may still be observed in many pieces that are produced on our stage. But few of those imitators came up to the spright-

<sup>1</sup> [It is taken, in part, from one of the novels of Cervantes. See Mr. Dyce's Introduction, p. 7. — 1847.]

liness of their model. It is to be regretted, that it is rarely practicable to adapt any one of his comedies to representation, without such changes as destroy their original raciness, and dilute the geniality of their wit.

81. There has not been much curiosity to investigate the sources of his humorous plays. A few are historical; but it seems highly probable that the Spanish stage of Lope de Vega and his contemporaries often furnished the subject, and perhaps many of the scenes, to his comedies. These possess all the characteristics ascribed to the comedies of intrigue so popular in that country. The scene, too, is more commonly laid in Spain, and the costume of Spanish manners and sentiments more closely observed, than we should expect from the invention of Englishmen. It would be worth the leisure of some lover of theatrical literature to search the collection of Lope de Vega's works, and, if possible, the other Spanish writers at the beginning of the century, in order to trace the footsteps of our two dramatists. Sometimes they may have had recourse to novels. The *Little French Lawyer* seems to indicate such an origin. Nothing had as yet been produced, I believe, on the French stage, from which it could have been derived; but the story and most of the characters are manifestly of French derivation. The comic humor of *La Writ*, in this play, we may ascribe to the invention of Fletcher himself.<sup>1</sup>

Origin of  
Fletcher's  
plays.

82. It is, however, not improbable, that the entire plot was sometimes original. Fertile as their invention was, in furnishing the incidents of their rapid and animated comedies, we may believe the fable itself to have sometimes sprung from no other source. It seems, indeed, now and then, as if the authors had gone forward with no very clear determination of their catastrophe; there is a want of unity in the conception, a want of consist-

Defects of  
their plots

<sup>1</sup> Dryden reckons this play with the *Spanish Curate*, the *Chances*, and *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, among those which he supposes to be drawn from Spanish novels. *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*, p. 204. By novels we should probably understand plays; for those which he mentions are little in the style of novels. But the *Little French Lawyer* has all the appearance of coming from a French novel: the scene lies in France, and I see nothing Spanish about it. Dryden was seldom well informed about the early stage

[In this conjecture I have been mistaken: the plot, Laing says, is borrowed from the Spanish *Rogue of Guzman d'Alfarache*; and Mr. Dyce adds that this writer took it from an older novel, by Masuccio Salernitano. Beaumont and Fletcher have, however, greatly improved the story. Dyce's *Beaumont and Fletcher*, vol. III. p. 459. See, too, what is said above, on the same authority, as to the *Spanish Curate*. — 1847.]



ency in the characters, which appear sometimes rather intended to surprise by incongruity, than framed upon a definite model. That of Ruy Diaz in the *Island Princess*, of whom it is hard to say whether he is a brave man or a coward, or alternately one and the other, is an instance to which many more might easily be added. In the *Bloody Brother*, Rollo sends to execution one of his counsellors, whose daughter Edith vainly interferes in a scene of great pathos and effect. In the progress of the drama, she arms herself to take away the tyrant's life: the whole of her character has been consistent and energetic; when Fletcher, to the reader's astonishment, thinks fit to imitate the scene between Richard and Lady Anne; and the ignominious fickleness of that lady, whom Shakspeare with wonderful skill, but in a manner not quite pleasing, sacrifices to the better display of the cunning crook-back, is here transferred to the heroine of the play, and the very character upon whom its interest ought to depend. Edith is on the point of giving up her purpose, when, some others in the conspiracy coming in, she recovers herself enough to exhort them to strike the blow.<sup>1</sup>

83. The sentiments and style of Fletcher, where not concealed by obscurity, or corruption of the text, are very dramatic. We cannot deny that the depths of Shakspeare's mind were often unfathomable by an audience: the bow was drawn by a matchless hand; but the shaft went out of sight. All might listen to Fletcher's pleasing, though not profound or vigorous, language; his thoughts are noble, and tinged with the ideality of romance, his metaphors vivid, though sometimes too forced; he possesses the idiom of English without much pedantry, though in many passages he strains it beyond common use; his versification, though studiously irregular, is often rhythmical and sweet. Yet we are seldom arrested by striking beauties; good lines occur in every page, fine ones but rarely: we lay down the volume with a sense of admiration of what we have read, but little of it remains distinctly in the memory. Fletcher is not much quoted, and has not even afforded

Their sentiments and style dramatic.

<sup>1</sup> Rotrou, in his *Wenceslas*, as we have already observed, has done something of the same kind: it may have been meant as an ungenerous and calumnious attack on the constancy of the female sex. If Rotrou were painters, the old fable says, they would exhibit a very different view

of their contentions with men. But Rotrou's are become very good painters: and it is but through their clemency that we are not delineated in such a style as would avenge them for the injuries of these tragedians.

copious materials to those who cull the beauties of ancient lore.

84. In variety of character, there can be no comparison between Fletcher and Shakspeare. A few types return upon us in the former: an old general, proud of his wars, faithful and passionate; a voluptuous and arbitrary king (for his principles of obedience do not seem to have inspired him with much confidence in royal virtues); a supple courtier, a high-spirited youth, or one more gentle in manners but not less stout in action; a lady, fierce and not always very modest in her chastity, repelling the solicitations of licentiousness; another impudently vicious.—form the usual pictures for his canvas. Add to these, for the lighter comedy, an amorous old man, a gay spendthrift, and a few more of the staple characters of the stage, and we have the materials of Fletcher's dramatic world. It must be remembered, that we compare him only with Shakspeare; and that, as few dramatists have been more copious than Fletcher, few have been so much called upon for inventions, in which the custom of the theatre has not exacted much originality. The great fertility of his mind in new combinations of circumstance gives as much appearance of novelty to the personages themselves as an unreflecting audience requires. In works of fiction, even those which are read in the closet, this variation of the mere dress of a character is generally found sufficient for the public.

85. The tragedies of Beaumont and Fletcher, by which our ancestors seem to have meant only plays wherein any one of the personages, or at least one whom the spectator would wish to keep alive, dies on the stage, are not very numerous; but in them we have as copious an effusion of blood as any contemporary dramas supply. The conclusion, indeed, of these, and of the tragi-comedies, which form a larger class, is generally mismanaged. A propensity to take the audience by surprise leads often to an unnatural and unsatisfactory catastrophe: it seems their aim to disappoint common expectation, to baffle reasonable conjecture, to mock natural sympathy. This is frequently the practice of our modern novelists, who find no better resource in the poverty of their invention to gratify the jaded palate of the world.

86. The comic talents of these authors far exceeded their skill in tragedy. In comedy they founded a new school, at

least in England, the vestiges of which are still to be traced in our theatre. Their plays are at once distinguishable from those of their contemporaries by the regard to dramatic effect which influenced the writer's imagination. Though not personally connected with the stage, they had its picture ever before their eyes. Hence their incidents are numerous and striking; their characters sometimes slightly sketched, not drawn, like those of Jonson, from a pre-conceived design, but preserving that degree of individual distinctness which a common audience requires, and often highly humorous without extravagance; their language brilliant with wit; their measure, though they do not make great use of prose, very lax and rapid, running frequently to lines of thirteen and fourteen syllables. Few of their comedies are without a mixture of grave sentiments or elevated characters; and, though there is much to condemn in their indecency and even licentiousness of principle, they never descend to the coarse buffoonery not unfrequent in their age. Never were dramatic poets more thoroughly gentlemen, according to the standard of their times; and, when we consider the court of James I., we may say that they were above that standard.<sup>1</sup>

87. The best of Fletcher's characters are female. he wanted that large sweep of reflection and experience which is required for the greater diversity of the other sex. None of his women delight us like Imogen and Desdemona; but he has many Imogens and Desdemonas of a fainter type. Spacelia, Zenobia, Celia, Aspasia, Evanthe, Lucina, Ordella, Oriana, present the picture that cannot be greatly varied without departing from its essence, but which never can be repeated too often to please us, of faithful, tender, self-denying female love, superior to every thing but virtue. Nor is he less successful, generally, in the contrast of minds stained by guilty passion, though in this he

Inferior to  
their con-  
tempo-  
aries.

Their fe-  
male char-  
acters.

<sup>1</sup> "Their plots were generally more regular than Shakspeare's, especially those which were made before Beaumont's death; and they understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better; whose wild debaucheries, and quickness of wit in repartees, no poet before them could paint as they have done. Humor, which Ben Jonson derived from particular persons, they made it not their business to describe; they represented all the passions very lively, but, above all, love. I am apt to believe the English language in

them arrived to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in, are rather superfluous than ornamental. Their plays are now the most pleasant and frequent entertainments of the stage; two of theirs being acted through the year for one of Shakspeare's or Jonson's: the reason is, because there is a certain gaiety in their comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays, which suits generally with all men's humors. Shakspeare's language is likewise a little obsolete, and Jonson's will fall short of theirs."—Dryden, p. 102.

sometimes exaggerates the outline till it borders on caricature. But it is in vain to seek in Fletcher the strong conceptions of Shakspeare, the Shylocks, the Lears, the Othellos. Schlegel has well said, that "scarce any thing has been wanting to give a place to Beaumont and Fletcher among the great dramatists of Europe but more of seriousness and depth, and the regulating judgment which prescribes the due limits in every part of composition." It was for want of the former qualities that they conceive nothing in tragedy very forcibly; for want of the latter, that they spoil their first conception by extravagance and incongruity.<sup>1</sup>

88. The reputation of Beaumont and Fletcher was at its height, and most of their plays had been given to the stage, when a worthy inheritor of their mantle appeared in Philip Massinger. Of his extant dramas, the *Virgin Martyr*, published in 1622, seems to be the earliest: but we have reason to believe that several are lost; and even this tragedy may have been represented some years before. The far greater part of his remaining pieces followed within ten years: the *Bashful Lover*, which is the latest now known, was written in 1636. Massinger was a gentleman, but in the service, according to the language of those times, of the Pembroke family: his education was at the university, his acquaintance both with books and with the manners of the court is familiar, his style and sentiments are altogether those of a man polished by intercourse of good society.

89. Neither in his own age nor in modern times does Massinger seem to have been put on a level with Fletcher or Jonson. Several of his plays, as has been just observed, are said to have perished in manuscript: few were represented after the Restoration; and it is only in consequence of his having met with more than one editor who has published his

<sup>1</sup> "Shakspeare," says Dryden, "writ better between man and man, Fletcher betwixt man and woman; consequently the one described friendship better, the other, love: yet Shakspeare taught Fletcher to write love, and Juliet and Desdemona are originals. It is true the scholar had the softest soul, but the master had the kinder. . . . Shakspeare had an universal mind, which comprehended all characters and passions: Fletcher, a more confined and limited: for though he treated love in perfection, yet honor, ambition, revenge, and generally all the stronger passions, he either touched not, or not masterly.

To conclude all, he was a limb of Shakspeare." — p. 301. This comparison is rather generally than strictly just, as is often the case with the criticisms of Dryden. That Fletcher wrote better than Shakspeare "between man and woman," or in displaying love, will be granted when he shall be shown to have excelled Ferdinand and Miranda, or Posthumus and Imogen. And, on the other hand, it is unjust to deny him credit for having sometimes touched the stronger emotions, especially honor and ambition, with great skill, though much inferior to that of Shakspeare.



collected works in a convenient form, that he is become tolerably familiar to the general reader. He is, however, far more intelligible than Fletcher: his text has not given so much embarrassment from corruption, and his general style is as perspicuous as we ever find it in the dramatic poets of that age. The obscure passages in Massinger, after the care that Gifford has taken, are by no means frequent.

90. Five of his sixteen plays are tragedies, that is, are concluded in death: of the rest, no one belongs to the class of mere comedy, but by the depth of the interest, the danger of the virtuous, or the atrocity of the vicious characters, as well as the elevation of the general style, must be ranked with the serious drama, or, as it was commonly termed, *tragi-comedy*. A shade of melancholy tinges the writings of Massinger; but he sacrifices less than his contemporaries to the public taste for superfluous bloodshed on the stage. In several of his plays, such as the *Picture* or the *Renegado*, where it would have been easy to determine the catastrophe towards tragedy, he has preferred to break the clouds with the radiance of a setting sun. He consulted in this his own genius, not eminently pathetic nor energetic enough to display the utmost intensity of emotion, but abounding in sweetness and dignity, apt to delineate the loveliness of virtue, and to delight in its recompense after trial. It has been surmised, that the religion of Massinger was that of the Church of Rome; a conjecture not improbable, though, considering the ascetic and imaginative piety which then prevailed in that of England, we need not absolutely go so far for his turn of thought in the *Virgin Martyr* or the *Renegado*.

91. The most striking excellence of this poet is his conception of character; and in this I must incline to place him above Fletcher, and, if I may venture to say it, even above Jonson. He is free from the hard outline of the one, and the negligent looseness of the other. He has indeed no great variety, and sometimes repeats, with such bare modifications as the story demands, the type of his first design. Thus the extravagance of conjugal affection is portrayed, feeble in *Theodosius*, frantic in *Domitian*, selfish in *Sforza*, suspicious in *Mathias*; and the same impulses of doting love return upon us in the guilty eulogies of *Mallefort* on his daughter. The vindictive hypocrisy of

General  
nature of  
his drama.

The distinctness  
of  
character.



Montreville in the Unnatural Combat has nearly its counterpart in that of Francesco in the Duke of Milan, and is again displayed with more striking success in Luke. This last villain, indeed, and that original, masterly, inimitable conception, Sir Giles Overreach, are sufficient to establish the rank of Massinger in this great province of dramatic art. But his own disposition led him more willingly to pictures of moral beauty. A peculiar refinement, a mixture of gentleness and benignity with noble daring, belong to some of his favorite characters, to Pisander in the Bondman, to Antonio in A Very Woman, to Charolois in the Fatal Dowry. It may be readily supposed, that his female characters are not wanting in these graces. It seems to me, that he has more variety in his women than in the other sex, and that they are less mannered than the heroines of Fletcher. A slight degree of error or passion in Sophia, Eudocia, Marcella, without weakening our sympathy, serves both to prevent the monotony of perpetual rectitude, so often insipid in fiction, and to bring forward the development of the story.

92. The subjects chosen by Massinger are sometimes historical; but others seem to have been taken from <sup>his sub-</sup> French or Italian novels, and those so obscure that <sup>jects.</sup> his editor Gifford, a man of much reading and industry, has seldom traced them. This, indeed, was an usual practice of our ancient dramatists. Their works have, consequently, a romantic character, presenting as little of the regular Plautine comedy as of the Greek forms of tragedy. They are merely novels in action, following probably their models with no great variation, except the lower and lighter episodes which it was always more or less necessary to combine with the story. It is from this choice of subjects, perhaps, as much as from the peculiar temper of the poets, that love is the predominant affection of the mind which they display; not cold and conventional, as we commonly find it on the French stage, but sometimes, as the novelists of the South were prone to delineate its emotions, fiery, irresistible, and almost resembling the fatalism of ancient tragedy; sometimes a subdued captive at the chariot wheels of honor or religion. The range of human passion is, consequently, far less extensive than in Shakspeare; but the variety of circumstance, and the modifications of the paramount affection itself, compensated for this deficiency.

93. Next to the grace and dignity of sentiment in Massinger, we must praise those qualities in his style. Every modern critic has been struck by the peculiar beauty of his language. In his harmonious swell of numbers, in his pure and genuine idiom, which a text, by good fortune and the diligence of its last editor, far less corrupt than that of Fletcher, enables us to enjoy, we find an unceasing charm. The poetical talents of Massinger were very considerable, his taste superior to that of his contemporaries; the coloring of his imagery is rarely overcharged; a certain redundancy, as some may account it, gives fulness, or what the painters call *impasto*, to his style, and, if it might not always conduce to effect on the stage, is on the whole suitable to the character of his composition.<sup>1</sup>

94. The comic powers of this writer are not on a level with the serious: with some degree of humorous conception, he is too apt to aim at exciting ridicule by caricature; and his dialogue wants altogether the sparkling wit of Shakspeare and Fletcher. Whether from a consciousness of this defect, or from an unhappy compliance with the viciousness of the age, no writer is more contaminated by gross indecency. It belongs indeed chiefly, not perhaps exclusively, to the characters he would render odious; but upon them he has bestowed this flower of our early theatre with no sparing hand. Few, it must be said, of his plays are incapable of representation merely on this account; and the offence is therefore more incurable in Fletcher.

95. Among the tragedies of Massinger, I should incline to prefer the Duke of Milan. The plot borrows enough from history to give it dignity, and to counterbalance in some measure the predominance of the passion of love which the invented parts of the drama exhibit. The characters of Sforza, Marcelia, and Francesco, are in Massinger's best manner; the story is skilfully and not improbably developed; the pathos is deeper than we generally find in his writings; the eloquence of language,

<sup>1</sup> [I quote the following criticism from Coleridge, without thoroughly assenting to it: "The styles of Massinger's plays and the Samson Agonistes are the two extremes of the arc within which the diction of dramatic poetry may oscillate. Shakspeare in his great plays is the midpoint. In the Samson Agonistes, col-

loquial language is left at the greatest distance; yet something of it is preserved, to render the dialogue probable: in Massinger the style is diffused, but diffused in the smallest degree possible, from animated conversation, by the value of poetry."—*Table Talk*, vol. ii. p. 121.—1842.]

especially in the celebrated speech of Sforza before the Emperor, has never been surpassed by him. Many, however, place the Fatal Dowry still higher. This tragedy furnished Rowe with the story of his Fair Penitent. The superiority of the original, except in suitableness for representation, has long been acknowledged. In the Unnatural Combat, probably among the earliest of Massinger's works, we find a greater energy, a bolder strain of figurative poetry, more command of terror, and perhaps of pity, than in any other of his dramas. But the dark shadows of crime and misery which overspread this tragedy belong to rather an earlier period of the English stage than that of Massinger, and were not congenial to his temper. In the Virgin Martyr, he has followed the Spanish model of religious Autos, with many graces of language and a beautiful display of Christian heroism in Dorothea; but the tragedy is in many respects unpleasing.

96. The Picture, The Bondman, and A Very Woman, may be reckoned among the best of the tragi-comedies of Massinger. But the general merits as well as <sup>And of his other plays.</sup> defects of this writer are perceptible in all; and the difference between these and the rest is not such as to be apparent to every reader. Two others are distinguishable as more English than the rest; the scene lies at home, and in the age; and to these the common voice has assigned a superiority. They are A New Way to Pay Old Debts and The City Madam. A character drawn, as it appears, from reality, and, though darkly wicked, not beyond the province of the higher comedy, Sir Giles Overreach, gives the former drama a striking originality and an impressive vigor. It retains, alone among the productions of Massinger, a place on the stage. Gifford inclines to prefer the City Madam; which, no doubt, by the masterly delineation of Luke, a villain of a different order from Overreach, and a larger portion of comic humor and satire than is usual with this writer, may dispute the palm. But there seems to be more violent improbability in the conduct of the plot, than in A New Way to Pay Old Debts.

97. Massinger, as a tragic writer, appears to me second only to Shakspeare: in the higher comedy, I can hardly think him inferior to Jonson. In wit and <sup>Ford.</sup> sprightly dialogue, as well as in knowledge of theatrical effect, he falls very much below Fletcher. These, however, are the

great names of the English stage. At a considerable distance below Massinger we may place his contemporary John Ford. In the choice of tragic subjects from obscure fictions, which have to us the charm of entire novelty, they resemble each other; but in the conduct of their fable, in the delineation of their characters, each of these poets has his distinguishing excellences. "I know," says Gifford, "few things more difficult to account for than the deep and lasting impression made by the more tragic portions of Ford's poetry." He succeeds, however, pretty well in accounting for it: the situations are awfully interesting, the distress intense, the thoughts and language becoming the expression of deep sorrow. Ford, with none of the moral beauty and elevation of Massinger, has, in a much higher degree, the power over tears: we sympathize even with his vicious characters, with Giovanni and Annabella and Bianca. Love, and love in guilt or sorrow, is almost exclusively the emotion he portrays: no heroic passion, no sober dignity, will be found in his tragedies. But he conducts his stories well and without confusion; his scenes are often highly wrought and effective; his characters, with no striking novelty, are well supported; he is seldom extravagant or regardless of probability. *The Broken Heart* has generally been reckoned his finest tragedy; and if the last act had been better prepared, by bringing the love of Calantha for Ithocles more fully before the reader in the earlier part of the play, there would be very few passages of deeper pathos in our dramatic literature. "The style of Ford," it is said by Gifford, "is altogether original and his own. Without the majestic march which distinguishes the poetry of Massinger, and with little or none of that light and playful humor which characterizes the dialogue of Fletcher, or even of Shirley, he is yet elegant and easy and harmonious; and though rarely sublime, yet sufficiently elevated for the most pathetic tones of that passion on whose romantic energies he chiefly delighted to dwell." Yet he censures afterwards Ford's affectation of uncouth phrases, and perplexity of language. Of comic ability this writer does not display one particle. Nothing can be meaner than those portions of his dramas, which, in compliance with the prescribed rules of that age, he devotes to the dialogue of servants or buffoons.

96. Shirley is a dramatic writer much inferior to those who have been mentioned, but has acquired some degree of reputa-



tion, or at least notoriety of name, in consequence of the new edition of his plays. These are between twenty and thirty in number: some of them, however, written in conjunction with his fellow-dramatists. A few of these are tragedies, a few are comedies drawn from English manners; but in the greater part we find the favorite style of that age, the characters foreign and of elevated rank, the interest serious, but not always of buskined dignity, the catastrophe fortunate; all, in short, that has gone under the vague appellation of tragi-comedy. Shirley has no originality, no force in conceiving or delineating character, little of pathos, and less perhaps of wit: his dramas produce no deep impression in reading, and of course can leave none in the memory. But his mind was poetical; his better characters, especially females, express pure thoughts in pure language; he is never tumid or affected, and seldom obscure; the incidents succeed rapidly; the personages are numerous; and there is a general animation in the scenes, which causes us to read him with some pleasure. No very good play, nor possibly any very good scene, could be found in Shirley; but he has many lines of considerable beauty. Among his comedies, the *Gamesters* may be reckoned the best. Charles I. is said to have declared, that it was "the best play he had seen these seven years;" and it has even been added, that the story was of his royal suggestion. It certainly deserves praise both for language and construction of the plot, and it has the advantage of exposing vice to ridicule; but the ladies of that court, the fair forms whom Vandyke has immortalized, must have been very different indeed from their posterity if they could sit it through. The *Ball*, and also some more among the comedies of Shirley, are so far remarkable and worthy of being read, that they bear witness to a more polished elegance of manners, and a more free intercourse in the higher class, than we find in the comedies of the preceding reign. A queen from France, and that queen Henrietta Maria, was better fitted to give this tone than Anne of Denmark. But it is not from Shirley's pictures that we can draw the most favorable notions of the morals of that age.

99. Heywood is a writer still more fertile than Shirley: between forty and fifty plays are ascribed to him. We have mentioned one of the best in the second volume, ante-dating, perhaps, its appearance by a few years. In the *English Traveller* he has returned to something like



the subject of *A Woman killed with Kindness*, but with less success. This play is written in verse, and with that ease and perspicuity, seldom rising to passion or figurative poetry, which distinguishes this dramatist. Young Geraldine is a beautiful specimen of the Platonic, or rather inflexibly virtuous lover, whom the writers of this age delighted to portray. On the other hand, it is difficult to pronounce whether the lady is a thorough-paced hypocrite in the first acts, or falls from virtue, like Mrs. Frankfort, on the first solicitation of a stranger. In either case, the character is unpleasing, and, we may hope, improbable. The underplot of this play is largely borrowed from the *Mostellaria* of Plautus, and is diverting, though somewhat absurd. Heywood seldom rises to much vigor of poetry; but his dramatic invention is ready, his style is easy, his characters do not transgress the boundaries of nature, and it is not surprising that he was popular in his own age.

100. Webster belongs to the first part of the reign of James. He possessed very considerable powers, and ought to be ranked, I think, the next below Ford. With less of poetic grace than Shirley, he had incomparably more vigor; with less of nature and simplicity than Heywood, he had a more elevated genius and a bolder pencil. But the deep sorrows and terrors of tragedy were peculiarly his province. "His imagination," says his last editor, "had a fond familiarity with objects of awe and fear. The silence of the sepulchre, the sculptures of marble monuments, the knolling of church bells, the ceremonies of the corpse, the yew that roots itself in dead men's graves, are the illustrations that most readily present themselves to his imagination." I think this well-written sentence a little one-sided, and hardly doing justice to the variety of Webster's power; but, in fact, he was as deeply tainted as any of his contemporaries with the savage taste of the Italian school, and, in the *Duchess of Malfy*, scarcely leaves enough on the stage to bury the dead.

101. This is the most celebrated of Webster's dramas. The *Duchess of Malfy* story is taken from Bandello, and has all that accumulation of wickedness and horror which the Italian novelists perversely described, and our tragedians as perversely imitated. But the scenes are wrought up with skill, and produce a strong impression. Webster has a superiority in delineating character above many of the old dramatists; he is

seldom extravagant beyond the limits of conceivable nature ; we find guilt, or even the atrocity, of human passions, but not that incarnation of evil spirits which some more ordinary dramatists loved to exhibit. In the character of the Duchess of Malfy herself, there wants neither originality, nor skill of management ; and I do not know that any dramatist after Shakspeare would have succeeded better in the difficult scene where she discloses her love to an inferior. There is perhaps a little failure in dignity and delicacy, especially towards the close ; but the Duchess of Malfy is not drawn as an Isabella or a Portia : she is a love-sick widow, virtuous and true-hearted, but more intended for our sympathy than our reverence.

102. The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona, is not much inferior in language and spirit to the Duchess <sup>Vittoria</sup> of Malfy ; but the plot is more confused, less inter- <sup>Corombona.</sup>esting, and worse conducted. Mr. Dyce, the late editor of Webster, praises the dramatic vigor of the part of Vittoria, but justly differs from Lamb, who speaks of "the innocence-resembling boldness" she displays in the trial scene. It is rather a delineation of desperate guilt, losing in a counterfeited audacity all that could seduce or conciliate the tribunal. Webster's other plays are less striking : in Appius and Virginia he has done perhaps better than any one who has attempted a subject not on the whole very promising for tragedy ; several of the scenes are dramatic and effective ; the language, as is usually the case with Webster, is written so as to display an actor's talents, and he has followed the received history sufficiently to abstain from any excess of slaughter at the close. Webster is not without comic wit, as well as a power of imagination : his plays have lately met with an editor of taste enough to admire his beauties, and not very over-partial in estimating them.

103. Below Webster, we might enumerate a long list of dramatists under the first Stuarts. Marston is a tumid and ranting tragedian, a wholesale dealer in murders and ghosts. Chapman, who assisted Ben Jonson and some others in comedy, deserves but limited praise for his Bussy d'Amboise. The style in this and in all his tragedies is extravagantly hyperbolical : he is not very dramatic, nor has any power of exciting emotion except in those who sympathize with a tumid pride and self-confidence. Yet he has more thinking than

many of the old dramatists; and the praise of one of his critics, though strongly worded, is not without some foundation, that we "seldom find richer contemplations on the nature of man and the world." There is also a poetic impetuosity in Chapman, such as has redeemed his translation of Homer, by which we are hurried along. His tragi-comedies, *All Fools* and *The Gentleman Usher*, are perhaps superior to his tragedies.<sup>1</sup> Rowley and Le Tourneur, especially the former, have occasionally good lines; but we cannot say that they were very superior dramatists. Rowley, however, was often in comic partnership with Massinger. Dekker merits a higher rank: he co-operated with Massinger in some of his plays, and manifests in his own some energy of passion and some comic humor. Middleton belongs to this lower class of dramatic writers: his tragedy entitled "*Women beware Women*" is founded on the story of Bianca Cappello; it is full of action, but the characters are all too vicious to be interesting, and the language does not rise much above mediocrity. In comedy, Middleton deserves more praise. "*A Trick to catch the Old One*," and several others that bear his name, are amusing and spirited. But Middleton wrote chiefly in conjunction with others, and sometimes with Jonson and Massinger.

<sup>1</sup> Chapman is well reviewed, and at length, in an article of the *Retrospective Review*, vol. iv. p. 333, and again in vol. v.

## CHAPTER VII.

HISTORY OF POLITE LITERATURE IN PROSE, FROM 1600 TO 1650.

### SECTION I.

Italian Writers—Boccalini—Grammatical and Critical Works—Gracian—French Writers—Balzac—Voiture—French Academy—Vaugelas—Patru and Le Maître—Style of English Prose—Earl of Essex—Knolles—Several other English Writers

1. It would be vain probably to inquire from what general causes we should deduce the decline of taste in Italy. None, at least, have occurred to my mind, relating to political or social circumstances, upon which we could build more than one of those sophistical theories which assume a casual relation between any concomitant events. Bad taste, in fact, whether in literature or the arts, is always ready to seize upon the public, being in many cases no more than a pleasure in faults which are really fitted to please us, and of which it can only be said that they hinder or impair the greater pleasure we should derive from beauties. Among these critical sins, none are so dangerous as the display of ingenious and novel thoughts or turns of phrase; for, as such enter into the definition of good writing, it seems very difficult to persuade the world that they can ever be the characteristics of bad writing. The metes and bounds of ornament, the fine shades of distinction which regulate a judicious choice, are only learned by an attentive as well as a naturally susceptible mind; and it is no rare case for an unprepared multitude to prefer the worse picture, the worse building, the worse poem, the worse speech, to the better. Education, an acquaintance with just criticism, and still more the habitual observation of what is truly beautiful in nature or art, or in the literature of taste, will sometimes generate almost a national tact that rejects the temptations of a meretricious and false style; but

experience has shown that this happy state of public feeling will not be very durable. Whatever might be the cause of it, this age of the Italian *seicentisti* has been reckoned almost as inauspicious to good writing in prose as in verse. "If we except," says Tiraboschi, "the Tuscans and a very few more, never was our language so neglected as in this period. We can scarce bear to read most of the books that were published, so rude and full of barbarisms is their style. Few had any other aim than to exercise their wit in conceits and metaphors; and, so long as they could scatter them profusely over their pages, cared nothing for the choice of phrases or the purity of grammar. Their eloquence on public occasions was intended only for admiration and applause, not to persuade or move."<sup>1</sup> And this, he says, is applicable alike to their Latin and Italian, their sacred and profane, harangues. The academical discourses, of which Dati has collected many in his *Prose Fiorentine*, are poor in comparison with those of the sixteenth.<sup>2</sup>

2. A later writer than Tiraboschi has thought this sentence against the *seicentisti* a little too severe, and, condemning equally with him the bad taste characteristic of that age, endeavors to rescue a few from the general censure.<sup>3</sup> It is at least certain that the insipidity of the cinque cento writers, their long periods void of any but the most trivial meaning, their affectation of the faults of Cicero's manner in their own language, ought not to be overlooked or wholly pardoned, while we dwell on an opposite defect of their successors, — the perpetual desire to be novel, brilliant, or profound. This may doubtless be the more offensive of the two; but it is, perhaps, not less likely to be mingled with something really worth reading.

3. It will not be expected that we can mention many Italian books, after what has been said, which come very precisely within the class of polite literature, or claim any praise on the ground of style. Their greatest luminary, Galileo, wrote with clearness, elegance, and spirit; no one among the moderns had so entirely rejected a dry and technical manner of teaching, and thrown such attractions round the form of truth. Himself a poet and a critic, he did not hesitate to ascribe his own philosophical perspicuity to the constant perusal of Ariosto. This I have mentioned in

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xi. p. 415.<sup>2</sup> Id.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv. 11.



another place: but we cannot too much remember that all objects of intellectual pursuit are as bodies acting with reciprocal forces in one system, being all in relation to the faculties of the mind, which is itself but one; and that the most extensive acquaintance with the various provinces of literature will not fail to strengthen our dominion over those we more peculiarly deem our own. The school of Galileo, especially Torricelli and Redi, were not less distinguished than himself for their union of elegance with philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

4. The letters of Bentivoglio are commonly known. This epistolary art was always cultivated by the Italians, first in the Latin tongue, and afterwards in their own. Bentivoglio has written with equal dignity and ease. Galileo's letters are also esteemed on account of their style as well as of what they contain. In what is more peculiarly called eloquence, the Italians of this age are rather emulous of success than successful: the common defects of taste in themselves, and in those who heard or read them, as well as, in most instances, the uninteresting nature of their subjects, exclude them from our notice.

5. Trajan Boccalini was by his disposition inclined to political satire, and possibly to political intrigue; but we have here only to mention the work by which he is best known, *Advices from Parnassus* (*Ragguagli di Parnaso*). If the idea of this once popular and celebrated book is not original, which I should rather doubt, though without immediately recognizing a similarity to any thing earlier (Lucian, the common prototype, excepted), it has at least been an original source. In the general turn of Boccalini's fictions, and perhaps in a few particular instances, we may sometimes perceive what a much greater man has imitated: they bear a certain resemblance to those of Addison, though the vast superiority of the latter in felicity of execution and variety of invention may almost conceal it. The *Ragguagli* are a series of despatches from the court of Apollo on Parnassus, where he is surrounded by eminent men of all ages. This fiction becomes in itself very cold and monotonous; yet there is much variety in the subjects of the decisions made by the god with the advice of his counsellors, and some strokes of satire are well hit, though more perhaps fail of effect. But we cannot now catch the force of every passage.

Boccalini's  
News from  
Parnassus.

<sup>1</sup> *Saif*, xiv. 12.

Boccalini is full of allusions to his own time, even where the immediate subject seems ancient. This book was published at Venice in 1612, at a time when the ambition of Spain was regarded with jealousy by patriotic Italians, who thought that pacific republic their bulwark and their glory. He inveighs, therefore, against the military spirit and the profession of war; "necessary sometimes, but so fierce and inhuman that no fine expressions can make it honorable."<sup>1</sup> Nor is he less severe on the vices of kings, nor less ardent in his eulogies of liberty; the government of Venice being reckoned, and not altogether untruly, an asylum of free thought and action in comparison with that of Spain. Aristotle, he reports in one of his despatches, was besieged in his villa on Parnassus by a number of armed men belonging to different princes, who insisted on his retracting the definition he had given of a tyrant, that he was one who governed for his own good and not that of the people, because it would apply to every prince, all reigning for their own good. The philosopher, alarmed by this demand, altered his definition; which was to run thus, that tyrants were certain persons of old time, whose race was now quite extinct.<sup>2</sup> Boccalini, however, takes care, in general, to mix something of playfulness with his satire, so that it could not be resented without apparent ill-nature. It seems, indeed, to us, free from invective, and rather meant to sting than to wound. But this, if a common rumor be true, did not secure him against a beating of which he died. The style of Boccalini is said by the critics to be clear and fluent, rather than correct or elegant; and he displays the taste of his times by extravagant metaphors. But to foreigners, who regard this less, his *Advices from Parnassus*, unequal of course, and occasionally tedious, must appear to contain many ingenious allusions, judicious criticisms, and acute remarks.

6. The *Pietra del Paragone* by the same author is an odd, and rather awkward, mixture of reality and fiction, all levelled at the court of Spain, and designed to keep alive a jealousy of its ambition. It is a kind of episode or supplement to the *Ragguagli di Parnaso*, the leading invention being preserved. Boccalini is an interesting writer, on account of the light he throws on the history and sentiments of Italy. He is in this work a still bolder writer than in the former; not only censuring Spain without mercy,

*The Pietra  
del Para-  
gone.*

<sup>1</sup> *Ragg.* 75.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* 76.

but even the Venetian aristocracy, observing upon the insolence of the young nobles towards the citizens, though he justifies the senate for 'not punishing the former more frequently with death by public execution, which would lower the nobility in the eyes of the people. They were, however, he says, as severely punished, when their conduct was bad, by exclusion from offices of trust. The *Pietra del Paragone* is a kind of political, as the *Ragguagli* is a critical, miscellany.

7. About twenty years after Boccacini, a young man appeared, by name Ferrante Pallavicino, who, with a fame more local and transitory, with less respectability of character, and probably with inferior talents, trod to a certain degree in his steps. As Spain had been the object of satire to the one, so was Rome to the other. Urban VIII., an ambitious pontiff, and vulnerable in several respects, was attacked by an imprudent and self-confident enemy, safe, as he imagined, under the shield of Venice. But Pallavicino, having been trepanned into the power of the pope, lost his head at Avignon. None of his writings have fallen in my way: that most celebrated at the time, and not wholly dissimilar in the conception to the *Advices from Parnassus*, was entitled *The Courier Robbed*; a series of imaginary letters which such a fiction gave him a pretext for bringing together. Perhaps we may consider Pallavicino as rather a counterpart to Jordano Bruno, in the satirical character of the latter, than to Boccacini.<sup>1</sup>

Ferrante  
Pallavi-  
cino.

8. The Italian language itself, grammatically considered, was still assiduously cultivated. The Academicians of Florence published the first edition of their celebrated *Vocabolario della Crusca* in 1613. It was avowedly founded on Tuscan principles, setting up the fourteenth century as the Augustan period of the language, which they disdained to call Italian; and though not absolutely excluding the great writers of the sixteenth age, whom Tuscan had not produced, giving in general a manifest preference to their own. Italy has rebelled against this tyranny of Florence, as she did, in the Social War, against that of Rome. Her Lombard and Romagnol and Neapolitan writers have claimed the rights of equal citizenship, and fairly won them in the field of literature. The *Vocabulary* itself was not received as a legislative code. Beni assailed it by his

Dictionary  
Della  
Crusca.

<sup>1</sup> Corniani, viii 206; Salti, xiv. 44

Anti-Crusca the same year; many invidiously published marginal notes to point out the inaccuracies; and, in the frequent revisions and enlargements of this dictionary, the exclusive character which it affected has, I believe, been nearly lost.

9. Buonomattei, himself a Florentine, was the first who completed an extensive and methodical grammar, "developing," says Tiraboschi, "the whole economy and system of our language." It was published entire, after some previous impressions of parts, with the title, *Della Lingua Toscana*, in 1643. This has been reckoned a standard work, both for its authority, and for the clearness, precision, and elegance with which it is written; but it betrays something of an academical and Florentine spirit in the rigor of its grammatical criticism.<sup>1</sup> Bartoli, a Ferrarese Jesuit, and a man of extensive learning, attacked that dogmatic school, who were accustomed to proscribe common phrases with a *Non si può* (It cannot be used), in a treatise entitled *Il torto ed il diritto del Non si può*. His object was to justify many expressions thus authoritatively condemned, by the examples of the best writers. This book was a little later than the middle of the century.<sup>2</sup>

10. Petrarch had been the idol, in general, of the preceding age; and, above all, he was the peculiar divinity of the Florentines. But this seventeenth century was, in the productions of the mind, a period of revolutionary innovation: men dared to ask why, as well as what, they ought to worship; and sometimes the same who rebelled against Aristotle, as an infallible guide, were equally contumacious in dealing with the great names of literature. Tassoni published in 1609 his *Observations on the Poems of Petrarch*. They are not written, as we should now think, adversely to one whom he professes to honor above all lyric poets in the world; and, though his critical remarks are somewhat minute, they seem hardly unfair. A writer like Petrarch, whose fame has been raised so high by his style, is surely amenable to this severity of examination. The finest sonnets Tassoni generally extols, but gives a preference, on the whole, to the odes; which, even if an erroneous judgment, cannot be called unfair upon the author of both.<sup>3</sup> He pro-

Tassoni's  
remarks on  
Petrarch.

<sup>1</sup> Tiraboschi, xl. 409; Salfi, xlii. 398.

<sup>2</sup> Coriand, vii. 259; Salfi, xlii. 417.

<sup>3</sup> "Tutte le rime, tutti i versi in generale del Petrarca lo fecero poeta; ma le

canzoni, per quanto a mi ne pare, furono quelle, che poeta grande e famoso lo fecero." — p. 46.



duces many parallel passages from the Latin poems of Petrarch himself, as well as from the ancients and from the earlier Italians and Provençals. The manner of Tassoni is often humorous, original, intrepid, satirical on his own times: he was a man of real taste, and no servile worshipper of names.

11. Galileo was less just in his observations upon Tasso. They are written with severity, and sometimes an insulting tone towards the great poet, passing over generally the most beautiful verses, though he sometimes bestows praise. The object is to point out the imitations of Tasso from Ariosto, and his general inferiority. The Observations on the Art of Writing by Sforza Pallavicino, the historian of the Council of Trent, published at Rome, 1646, is a work of general criticism containing many good remarks. What he says of imitation is worthy of being compared with Hurd; though he will be found not to have analyzed the subject with any thing like so much acuteness, nor was this to be expected in his age. Pallavicino has an ingenious remark, that elegance of style is produced by short metaphors, or *metaforette* as he calls them, which give us a more lively apprehension of an object than its proper name. This seems to mean only single words in a figurative sense, as opposed to phrases of the same kind. He writes in a pleasing manner, and is an accomplished critic without pedantry. Salfi has given rather a long analysis of this treatise.<sup>1</sup> The same writer, treading in the steps of Corniani, has extolled some Italian critics of this period, whose writings I have never seen, — Beni, author of a prolix commentary in Latin on the Poetics of Aristotle; Peregrino, not inferior, perhaps, to Pallavicino, though less known, whose theories are just and deep, but not expressed with sufficient perspicuity; and Fioretti, who assumed the fictitious name of Udeno Nisicli, and presided over an academy at Florence denominated the Apatisti. The Pro gymnasmi Poetici of this writer, if we may believe Salfi, ascend to that higher theory of criticism which deduces its rules not from precedents or arbitrary laws, but from the nature of the human mind, and has, in modern times, been distinguished by the name of æsthetic.<sup>2</sup>

Galileo's  
remarks  
on Tasso.

Sforza Pal-  
lavicino;

And other  
critical  
writers.

12. In the same class of polite letters as these Italian writ-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xiii. p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> Corniani, vii. 156; Salfi, xiii. 426.



ings, we may place the *Prolusiones Academicæ* of Fanianus *Strada*. They are agreeably written, and bespeak *Strada*. a cultivated taste. The best is the sixth of the second book, containing the imitations of six Latin poets, which Addison has made well known (as I hope) to every reader in the 115th and 119th numbers of the *Guardian*. It is here that all may judge of this happy and graceful fiction: but those who have read the Latin imitations themselves will perceive that *Strada* has often caught the tone of the ancients with considerable felicity. Lucan and Ovid are, perhaps, best counterfeited, Virgil not quite so well, and Lucretius worst of the six. The other two are Statius and Claudian.<sup>1</sup> In almost every instance, the subject chosen is appropriated to the characteristic peculiarities of the poet.

13. The style of Gongora, which deformed the poetry of Spain, extended its influence over prose. A writer named Gracian (it seems to be doubtful which of two brothers, Lorenzo and Balthazar) excelled Gongora himself in the affectation, the refinement, the obscurity of his style. "The most voluminous of his works," says Bouterwek, "bears the affected title of *El Criticon*. It is an allegorical picture of the whole course of human life, divided into Crises, that is sections, according to fixed points of view, and clothed in the formal garb of a pompous romance. It is scarcely possible to open any page of this book without recognizing in the author a man who is in many respects far from common, but who, from the ambition of being entirely uncommon in thinking and writing, studiously and ingeniously avoids nature and good taste. A profusion of the most ambiguous subtleties expressed in ostentatious language are scattered throughout the work; and these are the more offensive, in consequence of their union with the really grand view of the relationship of man to nature and his Creator, which forms the subject of the treatise. Gracian would have been an excellent writer, had he not so anxiously wished to be an extraordinary one."<sup>2</sup>

14. The writings of Gracian seem, in general, to be the quintessence of bad taste. The worst of all, probably, is *El Eroe*, which is admitted to be almost unintelligible by the

<sup>1</sup> A writer, quoted in Blount's *Censura Autorum*, p. 359, praises the imitation of Claudian above the rest, but thinks all excellent.

<sup>2</sup> *Ilist. of Spanish Literature*, p. 522.

number of far-fetched expressions, though there is more than one French translation of it. El Politico Fernando, a panegyric on Ferdinand the Catholic, seems as empty as it is affected and artificial. The style of Gracian is always pointed, emphatic, full of that which looks like profundity or novelty, though neither deep nor new. He seems to have written on a maxim he recommends to the man of the world: "If he desires that all should look up to him, let him permit himself to be known, but not to be understood."<sup>1</sup> His treatise entitled *Agudeza y Arte di Ingenio* is a system of *conceits*, digested under their different heads, and selected from Latin, Italian, and Spanish writers of that and the preceding age. It is said in the *Biographie Universelle*, that this work, though too metaphysical, is useful in the critical history of literature. Gracian obtained a certain degree of popularity in France and England.

15. The general taste of French writers in the sixteenth century, as we have seen, was simple and lively, full of sallies of natural wit and a certain archness of observation, but deficient in those higher qualities of language which the study of the ancients had taught men to admire. In public harangues, in pleadings, and in sermons, these characteristics of the French manner were either introduced out of place, or gave way to a tiresome pedantry. Du Vair was the first who endeavored to bring in a more elaborate and elevated diction. Nor was this confined to the example he gave. In 1607 he published a treatise on French eloquence, and on the causes through which it had remained at so low a point. This work relates chiefly to the eloquence of the bar, or at least that of public speakers; and the causes which he traces are chiefly such as would operate on that kind alone. But some of his observations are applicable to style in the proper sense; and his treatise has been reckoned the first which gave France the rules of good writing, and the desire to practise them.<sup>2</sup> A modern critic, who censures the Latinisms of Du Vair's style, admits that his treatise on eloquence makes an epoch in the language.<sup>3</sup>

French  
prose:  
Du Vair.

<sup>1</sup> "Si quiere que le veneren todos, permítase al conocimiento, no á la comprensión."

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert, *Jugemens des Savans sur les auteurs qui ont traité de la rhétorique*. This work is annexed to some editions of

Baillet. Goujet has copied or abridged Gilbert, without distinct acknowledgment, and not always carefully preserving the sense.

<sup>3</sup> Neufchâteau, *préface aux Œuvres de Pascal*, p. 181

16. A more distinguished era, however, is dated from 1625, when the letters of Balzac were published.<sup>1</sup> There had indeed been a few intermediate works, which contributed, though now little known, to the improvement of the language. Among these, the translation of Florus by Coeffeteau was reckoned a masterpiece of French style; and Vaugelas refers more frequently to this than to any other book. The French were very strong in translations from the classical writers; and to this they are certainly much indebted for the purity and correctness which they reached in their own language. These translators, however, could only occupy a secondary place. Balzac himself is hardly read. "The polite world," it was said a hundred years since, "knows nothing now of these works, which were once its delight."<sup>2</sup> But his writings are not formed to delight those who wish either to be merry or wise, to laugh or to learn; yet he has real merits, besides those which may be deemed relative to the age in which he came. His language is polished, his sentiments are just, but sometimes common,

Character  
of his writ-  
ings.

<sup>1</sup> The same writer fixes on this as an epoch, and it was generally admitted in the seventeenth century. The editor of Balzac's Works in 1935 says, after speaking of the unimproved state of the French language, full of provincial idioms and incorrect phrases: "M. de Balzac est venu en ce temps de confusion et de desordre, où toutes les lectures qu'il faisoit et toutes les actions qu'il entendoit lui devoient être suspectes, où il avoit à se dresser de tous les maîtres et de tous les exemples; et où il ne pouvoit arriver à son but qu'en s'éloignant de tous les chemins battus, ni marcher dans la bonne route qu'après se l'être ouverte à lui-même. Il l'a ouverte en effet, et pour lui et pour les autres; il y a fait entrer un grand nombre d'honnêtes gens, dont il étoit le guide et le modèle: et si la France voit aujourd'hui que ses écrivains sont plus polis et plus réguliers que ceux d'Espagne et d'Italie, il faut qu'elle en rende l'honneur à ce grand homme, dont la mémoire lui doit être en vénération. . . . La même obligation que nous avons à M. de Malherbe pour la poésie, nous l'avons à M. de Balzac pour la prose: il lui a prescrit des bornes et des règles: il lui a donné de la douceur et de la force, il a montré que l'éloquence doit avoir des accords, aussi bien que la musique, et il a su mêler si adroitement cette diversité de sons et de cadences, qu'il n'est point de plus délicieux concert que celui de ses paroles. C'est en plaçant

tous les mots avec tant d'ordre et de justesse qu'il ne laisse rien de moi ni de folle dans son discours," &c. This regard to the cadence of his periods is characteristic of Balzac. It has not, in general, been much practised in France, notwithstanding some splendid exceptions, especially in Bossuet. Olivet observes, that it was the peculiar glory of Balzac to have shown the capacity of the language for this rhythm. *Mét. de l'Acad. Française*, p. 84. But has not Du Vair some claim also? Neufchâteau gives a much more limited eulogy of Balzac. "Il avoit pris à la lettre les réflexions de Du Vair sur la trop grande bassesse de notre éloquence. Il s'en forma une haute idée; mais il se trompe d'abord dans l'application, car il porta dans le style épistolaire qui doit être familier et léger, l'enflure hyperbolique, la pompe, et le nombre, qui ne convient qu'aux grandes déclamations et aux harangues oratoires. . . . Ce défaut de Balzac contribua peut-être à son succès: car le goût n'étoit pas formé; mais il se corrigea dans la suite, et en parcourant son recueil on s'aperçoit des progrès sensibles qu'il faisoit avec l'âge. Ce recueil si précieux pour l'histoire de notre littérature a eu long temps une vogue extraordinaire. Nos plus grands auteurs l'avoient bien étudié. Mollère lui a emprunté quelques idées."

<sup>2</sup> Goussier, l. 420.

the cadence of his periods is harmonious, but too artificial and uniform: on the whole, he approaches to the tone of a languid sermon, and leaves a tendency to yawn. But, in his time, superficial truths were not so much proscribed as at present: the same want of depth belongs to almost all the moralists in Italian and in modern Latin. Balzac is a moralist with a pure heart, and a love of truth and virtue (somewhat alloyed by the spirit of flattery towards persons, however he may declaim about courts and courtiers in general), a competent erudition, and a good deal of observation of the world. In his *Aristippe*, addressed to Christina, and consequently a late work, he deals much in political precepts and remarks, some of which might be read with advantage. But he was accused of borrowing his thoughts from the ancients, which the author of an *Apology* for Balzac seems not wholly to deny. This apology indeed had been produced by a book on the Conformity of the eloquence of M. Balzac with that of the ancients.

17. The letters of Balzac are in twenty-seven books: they begin in 1620, and end about 1653; the first portion having appeared in 1625. "He passed all his life," <sup>His letters.</sup> says Vigneul-Marville, "in writing letters, without ever catching the right characteristics of that style."<sup>1</sup> This demands a peculiar ease and naturalness of expression, for want of which they seem no genuine exponents of friendship or gallantry, and hardly of polite manners. His wit was not free from pedantry, and did not come from him spontaneously. Hence he was little fitted to address ladies, even the Rambouillets; and indeed he had acquired so labored and artificial a way of writing letters, that even those to his sister, though affectionate, smell too much of the lamp. His advocates admit, that they are to be judged rather by the rules of oratorical than epistolary composition.

18. In the moral dissertations, such as that entitled the *Prince*, this elaborate manner is, of course, not less discernible, but not so unpleasant or out of place. Balzac has been called the father of the French language, the master and model of the great men who have followed him. But it is confessed by all, that he wanted the fine taste to regulate his

<sup>1</sup> *Mélanges de Littérature*, vol. I. p. 120. He adds, however, that Balzac had "un talent particulier pour embellir notre langue." The writer whom I quote under

the name of Vigneul-Marville, which he assumed, was D'Argonne, a Benedictine of Rouen



style according to the subject. Hence he is pompous and inflated upon ordinary topics; and, in a country so quick to seize the ridiculous as his own, not all his nobleness and purity of style, not the passages of eloquence which we often find, have been sufficient to redeem him from the sarcasms of those who have had more power to amuse. The stateliness, however, of Balzac is less offensive and extravagant than the affected intensity of language which distinguishes the style of the present age on both sides of the Channel, and which is in fact a much worse modification of the same fault.

19. A contemporary and rival of Balzac, though very unlike in most respects, was Voiture. Both one and the other were received with friendship and admiration in a celebrated society of Paris, the first which, on this side of the Alps, united the aristocracy of rank and of genius in one circle, that of the Hôtel Rambouillet. Catherine de Vivonne, widow of the Marquis de Rambouillet, was the owner of this mansion. It was frequented, during the long period of her life, by all that was distinguished in France, by Richelieu and Condé, as much as by Corneille, and a long host of inferior men of letters. The heiress of this family, Julie d'Angennes, beautiful and highly accomplished, became the central star of so bright a galaxy. The love of intellectual attainments, both in mother and daughter, the sympathy and friendship they felt for those who displayed them, as well as their moral worth, must render their names respectable; but these were in some measure sullied by false taste, and what we may consider an habitual affectation even in their conduct. We can scarcely give another name to the caprice of Julia, who, in the fashion of romance, compelled the Duke of Montausier to carry on a twelve years' courtship, and only married him in the decline of her beauty. This patient lover himself one of the most remarkable men in the court of Louis XIV., had, many years before, in 1633, presented her with what has been called the Garland of Julia, a collection to which the poets and wits of Paris had contributed. Every flower, represented in a drawing, had its appropriate little poem; and all conspired to the praise of Julia.<sup>1</sup>

20. Voiture is chiefly known by his letters: his other writings at least are inferior. These begin about 1627, and are

<sup>1</sup> [Two copies were made of the *Guirlande de Julie*, but, in the usual style of Huët, who tells us this, was one. *Muse diana*, p. 104. — 1842.]

Voiture.  
Hôtel  
Rambouillet.



addressed to Madame de Rambouillet and to several other persons of both sexes. Though much too labored and affected, they are evidently the original type of the French epistolary school, including those in England who have formed themselves upon it. Pope very frequently imitated Voiture; Walpole not so much in his general correspondence, but he knew how to fall into it. The object was to say what meant little, with the utmost novelty in the mode, and with the most ingenious compliment to the person addressed; so that he should admire himself and admire the writer. They are, of course, very tiresome after a short time; yet their ingenuity is not without merit. Balzac is more solemn and dignified, and it must be owned that he has more meaning. Voiture seems to have fancied that good sense spoils a man of wit. But he has not so much wit as *esprit*; and his letters serve to exemplify the meaning of that word. Pope, in addressing ladies, was nearly the ape of Voiture. It was unfortunately thought necessary, in such a correspondence, either to affect despairing love, which was to express itself with all possible gayety, or, where love was too presumptuous, as with the Rambouillets, to pour out a torrent of nonsensical flattery, which was to be rendered tolerable by far-fetched turns of thought. Voiture has the honor of having rendered this style fashionable. But, if the bad taste of others had not perverted his own, Voiture would have been a good writer. His letters, especially those written from Spain, are sometimes truly witty, and always vivacious. Voltaire, who speaks contemptuously of Voiture, might have been glad to have been the author of some of his *jeux d'esprit*; that, for example, addressed to the Prince of Condé in the character of a pike, founded on a game where the prince had played that fish. We should remember, also, that Voiture held his place in good society upon the tacit condition that he should always strive to be witty.<sup>1</sup>

21. But the Hôtel Rambouillet, with its false theories of taste derived in a great measure from the romances of Sendery and Calprenède, and encouraged by the agreeably artificial manner of Voiture, would have produced, in all pro-

<sup>1</sup> Nothing, says Olivet, could be more opposite than Balzac and Voiture. "L'un se portoit toujours au sublime, l'autre toujours au bas. L'un avoit une imagination élevée qui jetoit de la noblesse dans les moindres choses; l'autre, une

imagination enjouée, qui faisoit prêter à toutes ses pensées un air de gaillarderie. L'un, même lorsqu'il vouloit plaisanter, étoit toujours grave; l'autre, dans les occasions même sérieuses, trouvoit à rire." Hist. de l'Académie, p. 88.

bability, but a transient effect. A far more important event was the establishment of the French Academy. France was ruled by a great minister, who loved her glory and his own. This, indeed, has been common to many statesmen : but it was a more peculiar honor to Richelieu, that he felt the dignity which letters conferred on a nation. He was himself not deficient in literary taste : his epistolary style is manly, and not without elegance : he wrote theology in his own name, and history in that of Mezeray ; but, what is most to the present purpose, his remarkable fondness for the theatre led him not only to invent subjects for other poets, but, as it has been believed, to compose one forgotten tragi-comedy, *Mirame*, without assistance.<sup>1</sup> He availed himself, fortunately, of an opportunity which almost every statesman would have disregarded, to found the most illustrious institution in the annals of polite literature.

22. The French Academy sprang from a private society of men of letters at Paris, who, about the year 1629, agreed to meet once a week, as at an ordinary visit, conversing on all subjects, and especially on literature. Such among them as were authors communicated their works, and had the advantage of free and fair criticism. This continued for three or four years with such harmony and mutual satisfaction, that the old men, who remembered this period, says their historian, Pelisson, looked back upon it as a golden age. They were but nine in number, of whom Gombauld and Chapelain are the only names by any means famous ; and their meetings were at first very private. More by degrees were added, among others Boisrobert, a favorite of Richelieu, who liked to hear from him the news of the town. The Cardinal, pleased with the account of this society, suggested their public establishment. This, it is said, was displeasing to every one of them, and some proposed to refuse it : but the consideration, that the offers of such a man were not to be slighted, overpowered their modesty ; and they consented to become a royal institution. They now enlarged their numbers, created officers, and began to keep registers of their proceedings. These records commence on March 13, 1634, and are the basis of Pelisson's history. The name of French Academy was chosen after some deliberation. They were established by letters patent in January, 1635, which the Parliament of Paris

<sup>1</sup> Fontenelle, *Hist. du Théâtre*, p. 66.

enregistered with great reluctance, requiring not only a letter from Richelieu, but an express order from the king; and when this was completed in July, 1637, it was with a singular proviso, that the Academy should meddle with nothing but the embellishment and improvement of the French language, and such books as might be written by themselves, or by others who should desire their interference. This learned body of lawyers had some jealousy of the innovations of Richelieu; and one of them said it reminded him of the satire of Juvenal, where the senate, after ceasing to bear its part in public affairs, was consulted about the sauce for a turbot.<sup>1</sup>

23. The professed object of the Academy was to purify the language from vulgar, technical, or ignorant usages, and to establish a fixed standard. The Academi-<sup>Its objects and constitution.</sup>cians undertook to guard scrupulously the correctness of their own works, examining the arguments, the method, the style, the structure of each particular word. It was proposed by one that they should swear not to use any word which had been rejected by a plurality of votes. They soon began to labor in their vocation, always bringing words to the test of good usage, and deciding accordingly. These decisions are recorded in their registers. Their number was fixed by the letters patent at forty, having a director, chancellor, and secretary; the two former changed every two, afterwards every three months, the last chosen for life. They read discourses weekly, which, by the titles of some that Pellisson has given us, seem rather trifling and in the style of the Italian academies; but this practice was soon disused. Their more important and ambitious occupations were to compile a dictionary and a grammar: Chapelain drew up the scheme of the former, in which it was determined, for the sake of brevity, to give no quotations, but to form it from about twenty-six good authors in prose, and twenty in verse. Vaugelas was intrusted with the chief direction of this work.

24. The Academy was subjected, in its very infancy, to a severe trial of that literary integrity without which such an institution can only escape from being pernicious to the republic of letters by becoming too despicable and odious to produce mischief. On the appearance of the Cid, Richelieu, who had taken up a strong prejudice against it, insisted that the Academy should publish their

It publishes  
a critique  
on the Cid.

<sup>1</sup> Pellisson Hist. de l'Académie Française.

opinion on this play. The more prudent part of that body were very loath to declare themselves at so early a period of their own existence: but the Cardinal was not apt to take excuses; and a committee of three was appointed to examine the *Cid* itself, and the observations upon it which Scudery had already published. Five months elapsed before the *Sentimens de l'Académie Française sur la Tragédie du Cid* were made public in November, 1637.<sup>1</sup> These are expressed with much respect for Corneille, and profess to be drawn up with his assent, as well as at the instance of Scudery. It has been not uncommon to treat this criticism as a servile homage to power. But a perusal of it will not lead us to confirm so severe a reproach. The *Sentimens de l'Académie* are drawn up with great good sense and dignity. The spirit, indeed, of critical orthodoxy is apparent; yet this was surely pardonable in an age when the violation of rules had as yet produced nothing but such pieces as those of Hardy. It is easy to sneer at Aristotle when we have a Shakspeare; but Aristotle formed his rules on the practice of Sophocles. The Academy could not have done better than by inculcating the soundest maxims of criticism; but they were a little too narrow in their application. The particular judgments which they pass on each scene of the play, as well as those on the style, seem for the most part very just, and such as later critics have generally adopted; so that we can really see little ground for the allegation of undue compliance with the Cardinal's prejudices, except in the frigid tone of their praise, and in their omission to proclaim that a great dramatic genius had arisen in France.<sup>2</sup> But this is so much the common vice or blindness of critics, that it may have sprung less from baseness than from a fear to compromise their own superiority by vulgar admiration. The Academy had great pretensions, and Corneille was not yet the Corneille of France and of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Pellisson. The printed edition bears the date of 1638.

<sup>2</sup> They conclude by saying, that, in spite of the faults of this play, "la naïveté et la véhémence de ses passions, la force et la délicatesse de plusieurs de ses pensées, et cet agrément inexplicable qui se mêle dans toute ses défauts lui ont acquis un rang considérable entre les poètes Français de ce genre qui ont le plus donné de satisfaction. Si l'auteur ne doit pas toute sa réputation à son mérite, il ne la

doit pas toute à son bonheur, et la nature lui a été assez libérale pour excuser la fortune si elle lui a été prodigue."

The Academy, justly, in my opinion, blame Corneille for making *Chimène* count to marry Rodrigue the same day that he had killed her father. "Cela surpasse tout sorte de créance, et ne peut vraisemblablement tomber dans l'esprit non seulement d'une sage fille, mais d'une qui seroit le plus dépourvue d'honneur et d'humanité," &c. — p. 49.

25. Giberit, Goujet, and other writers enumerate several works on the grammar of the French language in this period. But they were superseded; and we may almost say, that an era was made in the national literature, by the publication of Vaugelas, *Remarques sur la Langue Française*, in 1649. Thomas Corneille, who, as well as Patru, published notes on Vaugelas, observes that the language has only been written with politeness since the appearance of these remarks. They were not at first received with general approbation, and some even in later times thought them too scrupulous; but they gradually became of established authority. Vaugelas is always clear, modest, and ingenuous in stating his opinion. His remarks are 547 in number; no gross fault being noticed, nor any one which is not found in good authors. He seldom mentions those whom he censures. His test of correct language is the manner of speaking in use with the best part (*la plus saine partie*) of the court, conformably with the manner of writing in the best part of contemporary authors. But though we must have recourse to good authors in order to establish an indisputably good usage, yet the court, he thinks, contributes incomparably more than books; the consent of the latter being as it were the seal and confirmation of what is spoken at court, and deciding what is there doubtful. And those who study the best authors get rid of many faults common at court, and acquire a peculiar purity of style. None, however, can dispense with a knowledge of what is reckoned good language at court; since much that is spoken there will hardly be found in books. In writing, it is otherwise; and he admits that the study of good authors will enable us to write well, though we shall write still better by knowing how to speak well. Vaugelas tells us, that his knowledge was acquired by long practice at court, and by the conversation of Cardinal Perron and of Coeffeteau.

Vaugelas' remarks on the French language.

26. La Mothe le Vayer, in his *Considérations sur l'Eloquence Française*, 1647, has endeavored to steer a middle course between the old and the new schools of French style, but with a marked desire to withstand the latter. He blames Du Vair for the strange and barbarous words he employs. He laughs also at the nicety of those who were beginning to object to a number of common French words. One would not use the conjunction *Car*; against

La Mothe le Vayer.



which folly, Le Vayer wrote a separate treatise.<sup>1</sup> He defends the use of quotations in a different language, which some purists in French style had in horror. But this treatise seems not to contain much that is valuable, and it is very diffuse.

27. Two French writers may be reckoned worthy of a place in this chapter, who are, from the nature of their works, not generally known out of their own country, and whom I cannot refer with absolute propriety to this rather than to the ensuing period, except by a certain character and manner of writing, which belongs more to the earlier than the later moiety of the seventeenth century. These were two lawyers, Patru and Le Maistre. The pleadings of Patru appear to me excellent in their particular line of forensic eloquence, addressed to intelligent and experienced judges. They greatly resemble what are called the private orations of Demosthenes, and those of Lysias and Isæus, especially, perhaps, the last. No ambitious ornament, no appeal to the emotions of the heart, no bold figures of rhetoric, are permitted in the Attic severity of this style; or, if they ever occur, it is to surprise us as things rather uncommon in the place where they appear than in themselves. Patru does not even employ the exordium usual in speeches, but rushes instantaneously, though always perspicuously, into his statement of the case. In the eyes of many, this is no eloquence at all; and it requires perhaps some taste for legal reasoning to enter fully into its merit. But the Greek orators are masters whom a modern lawyer need not blush to follow, and to follow, as Patru did, in their respect for the tribunal they addressed. They spoke to rather a numerous body of judges; but those were Athenians, and, as we have reason to believe, the best and most upright, the salt of that vicious city. Patru again spoke to the Parliament of Paris, men too well versed in the ways of law and justice to be the dupes of tinkling sound. He is therefore plain, lucid, well arranged, but not emphatic or impetuous: the subjects of his published speeches would not admit of such qualities, though Patru is said to have employed on some occasions the burning words of the highest oratory. His style has always been reckoned purely and rigidly French: but I have been led rather to

<sup>1</sup> This was Glomberville, in whose immense romance, *Polexandre*, it is said that this word only occurs three times; a discovery which does vast honor to the person who took the pains to make it.

Legal  
speeches  
of Patru,

praise what has struck me in the substance of his pleadings; which, whether read at this day in France or not, are, I may venture to say, worthy to be studied by lawyers, like those to which I have compared them, the strictly forensic portion of Greek oratory. In some speeches of Patru which are more generally praised, — that on his own reception in the Academy, and one complimentary to Christina, — it has seemed to me that he falls very short of his judicial style: the ornaments are commonplace, and such as belong to the panegyrical department of oratory; in all ages less important and valuable than the other two. It should be added, that Patru was not only one of the purest writers, but one of the best critics whom France possessed.<sup>1</sup>

28. The forensic speeches of Le Maistre are more eloquent, in a popular sense of the word, more ardent, <sup>And of the</sup> more imaginative, than those of Patru. The one <sup>Maistre.</sup> addresses the judges alone: the other has a view to the audience. The one seeks the success of his cause alone; the other, that and his own glory together. The one will be more prized by the lovers of legal reasoning; the other, by the majority of mankind. The one more reminds us of the orations of Demosthenes for his private clients, the other of those of Cicero. Le Maistre is fervid and brilliant, — he hurries us with him; in all his pleadings, warmth is his first characteristic, and a certain elegance is the second. In the power of statement, I do not perceive that he is inferior to Patru: both are excellent. Wherever great moral or social topics, or extensive views of history and human nature, can be employed, Le Maistre has the advantage. Both are concise, relatively to the common verbosity of the bar; but Le Maistre has much more that might be retrenched, — not that it is redundant in expression, but unnecessary in substance. This is owing to his ambitious display of general erudition: his quotations are too frequent and too ornamental, partly drawn from the ancients, but more from the fathers. Ambrose, in fact, Jerome and Augustin, Chrysostom, Basil and Gregory, were the models whom the writers of this age were accustomed to study; and hence they are often, and Le Maistre among the rest, too apt to declaim where they should prove, and to use

<sup>1</sup> Perrault says of Patru, in his *Hommes illustres de France*, vol. ii. p. 96: "Seu plaidoyers servent encore aujourd'hui de modele pour écrire correctement en notre

langue." Yet they were not much above thirty years old, — so much had the language changed, as to rules of writing, within that time.

arguments from analogy, rather striking to the common hearer, than likely to weigh much with a tribunal. He has less simplicity, less purity of taste, than Patru; his animated language would, in our courts, be frequently effective with a jury, but would seem too indefinite and commonplace to the judges: we should crowd to hear *Le Maistre*, we should be compelled to decide with Patru. They are both, however, very superior advocates, and do great honor to the French bar.

29. A sensible improvement in the general style of English writers had come on before the expiration of the sixteenth century; the rude and rough phrases, sometimes almost requiring a glossary, which lie as spots of rust on the pages of Latimer, Grafton, Aylmer, or even Ascham, had been chiefly polished away: if we meet in Sidney, Hooker, or the prose of Spenser, with obsolete expressions or forms, we find none that are in the least unintelligible, none that give us offence. But to this next period belong most of those whom we commonly reckon our old English writers; men often of such sterling worth for their sense, that we might read them with little regard to their language, yet, in some instances at least, possessing much that demands praise in this respect. They are generally nervous and effective, copious to redundancy in their command of words, apt to employ what seemed to them ornament with much imagination rather than judicious taste, yet seldom degenerating into commonplace and indefinite phraseology. They have, however, many defects; some of them, especially the most learned, are full of pedantry, and deform their pages by an excessive and preposterous mixture of Latinisms unknown before;<sup>1</sup> at other times, we are disgusted by colloquial and even vulgar idioms or proverbs; nor is it uncommon to find these opposite blemishes not only in the same author, but in the same passages. Their periods, except in a very few, are ill-constructed and tediously prolonged; their ears (again with some exceptions) seem to have been insensible to the beauty of rhythmical prose; grace is commonly wanting; and their notion of the artifices of style, when they thought at all about them, was not congenial to our own language. This may be deemed a general description of the English writers under James and Charles: we shall now proceed to mention some

<sup>1</sup> In Pratt's edition of Bishop Hall's works, we have a glossary of unusual words employed by him. They amount

to more than eleven hundred, the greater part being of Latin or Greek origin: some are Gallicisms.

of the most famous, and who may, in a certain degree, be deemed to modify this censure.

30. I will begin with a passage of very considerable beauty, which is here out of its place, since it was written in the year 1598. It is found in the Apology for the Earl of Essex, published among the works of Lord Bacon, and passing, I suppose, commonly for his. It seems nevertheless, in my judgment, far more probably genuine. We have nowhere in our early writers a flow of words so easy and graceful, a structure so harmonious, a series of antitheses so spirited without affectation, an absence of quaintness, pedantry, and vulgarity so truly gentlemanlike, a paragraph so worthy of the most brilliant man of his age. This could not have come from Bacon, who never divested himself of a certain didactic formality, even if he could have counterfeited that chivalrous generosity which it was not in his nature to feel. It is the language of a soldier's heart, with the unstudied grace of a noble courtier.<sup>1</sup>

31. Knolles, already known by a spirited translation of Bodin's Commonwealth, published in 1610 a copious History of the Turks, bringing down his narrative to the most recent times. Johnson, in a paper of the Rambler, has given him the superiority over all English

Earl of Essex.  
Essex.

Knolles's  
History of  
the Turks.

"A word for my friendship with the chief men of action, and favor generally to the men of war; and then I come to their main objection, which is my crossing of the treaty in hand. For most of them that are accounted the chief men of action, I do confess, I do entirely love them. They have been my companions both abroad and at home; some of them began the wars with me, most have had place under me, and many have had me a witness of their rising from captains, lieutenants, and private men to those charges which since by their virtue they have obtained. Now that I have tried them, I would choose them for friends, if I had them not: before I had tried them, God by his providence chose them for me. I love them for mine own sake; for I find sweetness in their conversation, strong assistance in their employments with me, and happiness in their friendship. I love them for their virtues' sake, and for their greatness of mind (for little minds, though never so full of virtue, can be but a little virtuous), and for their great understanding; for to understand little things, or things not of use, is little better than to understand nothing at all. I love them for their affections: for self-loving men

love ease, pleasure, and profit; but they that love pain, danger, and fame, show that they love public profit more than themselves. I love them for my country's sake: for they are England's best armor of defence, and weapons of offence. If we may have peace, they have purchased it; if we must have war, they must manage it. Yet, while we are doubtful and in treaty, we must value ourselves by what may be done, and the enemy will value us by what hath been done by our chief men of action.

"That generally I am affected to the men of war, it should not seem strange to any reasonable man. Every man doth love them of his own profession. The grave judges favor the students of the law; the reverend bishops, the laborers in the ministry; and I (since her Majesty hath yearly used my service in her late actions) must reckon myself in the number of her men of war. Before action, Providence makes me cherish them for what they can do; in action, necessity makes me value them for the service they do; and after action, experience and thankfulness make me love them for the service they have done."



historians. "He has displayed all the excellences that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. . . . Nothing could have sunk this author into obscurity but the remoteness and barbarity of the people whose story he relates. It seldom happens that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject; and that writer who might have secured perpetuity to his name by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprises and revolutions of which none desire to be informed."<sup>1</sup> The subject, however, appeared to Knolles, and I know not how we can say erroneously, one of the most splendid that he could have selected. It was the rise and growth of a mighty nation, second only to Rome in the constancy of success, and in the magnitude of empire; a nation fierce and terrible in that age, the present scourge of half Christendom, and, though from our remoteness not very formidable to ourselves, still one of which not the bookish man in his closet or the statesman in council had alone heard, but the smith at his anvil, and the husbandman at his plough. A long decrepitude of the Turkish Empire on one hand, and our frequent alliance with it on the other, have since obliterated the apprehensions and interests of every kind which were awakened throughout Europe by its youthful fury and its mature strength. The subject was also new in England, yet rich in materials; various, in comparison with ordinary history, though not perhaps so fertile of philosophical observation as some others, and furnishing many occasions for the peculiar talents of Knolles. These were displayed, not in depth of thought, or copiousness of collateral erudition, but in a style and in a power of narration which Johnson has not too highly extolled. His descriptions are vivid and animated; circumstantial, but not to feebleness: his characters are drawn with a strong pencil. It is, indeed, difficult to estimate the merits of an historian very accurately without having before our eyes his original sources: he may probably have translated much that we admire, and he had shown that he knew how to translate. In the style of Knolles, there is sometimes, as Johnson has hinted, a slight excess of desire to make every

<sup>1</sup> Rambler, No. 122.



phrase effective: but he is exempt from the usual blemishes of his age; and his command of the language is so extensive, that we should not err in placing him among the first of our elder writers. Comparing, as a specimen of Knolles's manner, his description of the execution of Mustapha, son of Solymán, with that given by Robertson, where the latter historian has been as circumstantial as his limits would permit, we shall perceive that the former paints better his story, and deepens better its interest.<sup>1</sup>

32. Raleigh's History of the World is a proof of the respect for laborious learning that had long distinguished Europe. We should expect from the prison-hours of a soldier, a courtier, a busy intriguer in state affairs, a poet and man of genius, something well worth our notice; but hardly a prolix history of the ancient world, hardly disquisitions on the site of Paradise and the travels of Cain. These are probably translated, with little alteration, from some of the learned writings of the Continent: they are by much the least valuable portion of Raleigh's work. The Greek and Roman story is told more fully and exactly than by any earlier English author, and with a plain eloquence which has given this book a classical reputation in our language, though from its length, and the want of that critical sifting of facts which we now justly demand, it is not greatly read. Raleigh has intermingled political reflections, and illustrated his history by episodes from modern times, which perhaps are now the most interesting passages. It descends only to the second Macedonian War: the continuation might have been more generally valuable; but either the death of Prince Henry, as Raleigh himself tells us, or the new schemes of ambition which unfortunately opened upon his eyes, prevented the execution of the large plan he had formed. There is little now obsolete in the words of Raleigh, nor, to any great degree, in his turn of phrase; the periods, when pains have been taken with them, show that artificial structure which we find in Sidney and Hooker; he is less pedantic than most of his contemporaries, seldom low, never affected.

<sup>1</sup> Knolles, p. 515. Robertson's Charles the Fifth, book xi. [The principal authority for this description appears to be Busbequius, in his excellent Legationis Turcicae Epistolæ. It has been justly

observed, that I might have mentioned Busbequius in a former volume among the good Latin writers of the sixteenth century. — 1842.]

## 33 Daniel's History of England from the Conquest to the

Daniel's  
History of  
England.

Reign of Edward III., published in 1618, is deserving of some attention on account of its language. It is written with a freedom from all stiffness, and a purity of style, which hardly any other work of so early a date exhibits. These qualities are indeed so remarkable, that it would require a good deal of critical observation to distinguish it even from writings of the reign of Anne; and, where it differs from them (I speak only of the secondary class of works, which have not much individuality of manner), it is by a more select idiom, and by an absence of the Gallicism or vulgarity which are often found in that age. It is true that the merits of Daniel are chiefly negative; he is never pedantic or antithetical or low, as his contemporaries were apt to be: but his periods are ill-constructed; he has little vigor or elegance; and it is only by observing how much pains he must have taken to reject phrases which were growing obsolete, that we give him credit for having done more than follow the common stream of easy writing. A slight tinge of archaism, and a certain majesty of expression, relatively to colloquial usage, were thought by Bacon and Raleigh congenial to an elevated style: but Daniel, a gentleman of the king's household, wrote as the court spoke; and his facility would be pleasing if his sentences had a less negligent structure. As an historian, he has recourse only to common authorities; but his narration is fluent and perspicuous, with a regular vein of good sense, more the characteristic of his mind, both in verse and prose, than any commanding vigor.

## 34. The style of Bacon has an idiosyncrasy which we might expect from his genius. It can rarely indeed

Bacon.

happen, and only in men of secondary talents, that the language they use is not by its very choice and collocation, as well as its meaning, the representative of an individuality that distinguishes their turn of thought. Bacon is elaborate, sententious, often witty, often metaphorical; nothing could be spared; his analogies are generally striking and novel; his style is clear, precise, forcible; yet there is some degree of stiffness about it, and, in mere language, he is inferior to Raleigh. The History of Henry VII., admirable as many passages are, seems to be written rather too ambitiously, and with too great an absence of simplicity.

35. The polemical writings of Milton, which chiefly fall within this period, contain several bursts of his splendid imagination and grandeur of soul. They are, however, much inferior to the *Areopagitica*, or *Plea for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*. Many passages in this famous tract are admirably eloquent; an intense love of liberty and truth glows through it; the majestic soul of Milton breathes such high thoughts as had not been uttered before: yet even here he frequently sinks in a single instant, as is usual with our old writers, from his highest flights to the ground; his intermixture of familiar with learned phraseology is displeasing, his structure is affectedly elaborate, and he seldom reaches any harmony. If he turns to invective, as sometimes in this treatise, and more in his *Apology for Smectymnus*, it is mere ribaldrous vulgarity blended with pedantry: his wit is always poor and without ease. An absence of idiomatic grace, and an use of harsh inversions violating the rules of the language, distinguish in general the writings of Milton, and require, in order to compensate them, such high beauties as will sometimes occur.

36. The *History of Clarendon* may be considered as belonging rather to this than to the second period of the century, both by the probable date of composition and by the nature of its style. He is excellent in every thing that he has performed with care; his characters are beautifully delineated; his sentiments have often a noble gravity, which the length of his periods, far too great in itself, seems to befit; but, in the general course of his narration, he is negligent of grammar and perspicuity, with little choice of words, and therefore sometimes idiomatic without ease or elegance. The official papers on the royal side, which are generally attributed to him, are written in a masculine and majestic tone, far superior to those of the parliament. The latter had, however, a writer who did them honor: May's *History of the Parliament* is a good model of genuine English; he is plain, terse, and vigorous, never slovenly, though with few remarkable passages, and is, in style as well as substance, a kind of contrast to Clarendon.

37. The famous *Icon Basilice*, ascribed to Charles I., may deserve a place in literary history. If we could trust its panegyrist, few books in our language have done it more credit by dignity of sentiment, and beauty

The Icon  
Basilice.

of style. It can hardly be necessary for me to express my unhesitating conviction, that it was solely written by Bishop Gauden, who, after the Restoration, unequivocally claimed it as his own. The folly and impudence of such a claim, if it could not be substantiated, are not to be presumed as to any man of good understanding, fair character, and high station, without stronger evidence than has been alleged on the other side; especially when we find that those who had the best means of inquiry, at a time when it seems impossible that the falsehood of Gauden's assertion should not have been demonstrated, if it were false, acquiesced in his pretensions. We have very little to place against this, except secondary testimony; vague, for the most part, in itself, and collected by those whose veracity has not been put to the test like that of Gauden.<sup>1</sup> The style also of the *Icon Basilice* has been identified by Mr. Todd with that of Gauden by the use of several phrases so peculiar, that we can hardly conceive them to have suggested themselves to more than one person. It is, nevertheless, superior to his acknowledged writings. A strain of majestic melancholy is well kept up; but the personated sovereign is rather too theatrical for real nature, the language is too rhetorical and amplified, the periods too artificially elaborated. None but scholars and practised writers employ such a style as this.

38. *Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy* belongs, by its systematic divisions and its accumulated quotations, to the class of mere erudition: it seems at first sight like those tedious Latin folios into which scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries threw the materials of their *Adversaria*, or commonplace-books, painfully selected and arranged by the labor of many years. But writing fortunately in English, and in a style not by any means devoid of point and terseness, with much good sense and observation of men as well as of books, and having also

*Burton's  
Anatomy  
of Melan-  
choly.*

<sup>1</sup> There is only one claimant, in a proper sense, for the *Icon Basilice*, which is Gauden himself: the king neither appears by himself nor representative. And, though we may find several instances of plagiarism in literary history (one of the grossest being the publication by a Spanish friar, under another title, of a book already in print with the name of Hyperius of Marburg, its real author), yet I cannot call to mind any, where a man known to the world has asserted in terms his own

authorship of a book not written by himself, but universally ascribed to another, and which had never been in his possession. A story is told, and I believe truly, that a young man assumed the credit of Blackenzie's *Man of Feeling* while it was still anonymous. But this is widely different from the case of the *Icon Basilice*. We have had an interminable discussion as to the Letters of Junius; but no one has ever claimed this doriclet property to himself, or told the world, "I am Junius."



the skill of choosing his quotations for their rareness, oddity, and amusing character, without losing sight of their pertinence to the subject, he has produced a work of which, as is well known, Johnson said that it was the only one which had ever caused him to leave his bed earlier than he had intended. Johnson, who seems to have had some turn for the singularities of learning which fill the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, may perhaps have raised the credit of Burton higher than his desert. He is clogged by excess of reading, like others of his age; and we may peruse entire chapters without finding more than a few lines that belong to himself. This becomes a wearisome style; and, for my own part, I have not found much pleasure in glancing over the *Anatomy of Melancholy*. It may be added, that he has been a collector of stories, far more strange than true, from those records of signets, the old medical writers of the sixteenth century, and other equally deceitful sources. Burton lived at Oxford, and his volumes are apparently a great sweeping of miscellaneous literature from the Bodleian Library.

39. John Earle, after the Restoration, Bishop of Worcester, and then of Salisbury, is author of *Microcosmographia*, or a Piece of the Worlde discovered in Earle's Characters. *Essays and Characters*, published anonymously in 1628. In some of these short characters, Earle is worthy of comparison with La Bruyère; in others, perhaps the greater part, he has contented himself with pictures of ordinary manners, such as the varieties of occupation, rather than of intrinsic character, supply. In all, however, we find an acute observation and a happy humor of expression. The chapter entitled the Sceptic is best known: it is witty, but an insult throughout on the honest searcher after truth, which could have come only from one that was content to take up his own opinions for ease or profit. Earle is always gay, and quick to catch the ridiculous, especially that of exterior appearances: his style is short, describing well with a few words, but with much of the affected quaintness of that age. It is one of those books which give us a picturesque idea of the manners of our fathers at a period now become remote; and for this reason, were there no other, it would deserve to be read.

40. But the *Microcosmography* is not an original work in its plan or mode of execution: it is a close imitation of the *Characters* of Sir Thomas Overbury. They both belong to



the favorite style of apothegm, in which every sentence is a point or a witticism. Yet the entire character so delineated produces a certain effect: it is a Dutch picture, a Gerard Dow, somewhat too elaborate. Earle has more natural humor than Overbury, and hits his mark more neatly; the other is more satirical, but often abusive and vulgar. The Fair and Happy Milkmaid, often quoted, is the best of his characters. The wit is often trivial and flat; the sentiments have nothing in them general, or worthy of much remembrance; praise is only due to the graphic skill in delineating character. Earle is as clearly the better, as Overbury is the more original, writer.

41. A book by Ben Jonson, entitled *Timber, or Disco-  
Jonson's veries made upon Men and Matter,*<sup>1</sup> is altogether  
*Discoveries.* miscellaneous, the greater part being general moral remarks, while another portion deserves notice as the only book of English criticism in the first part of the seventeenth century. The observations are unconnected, judicious, sometimes witty, frequently severe. The style is what was called pregnant, leaving much to be filled up by the reader's reflection. Good sense, and a vigorous manner of grappling with every subject, will generally be found in Jonson; but he does not reach any very profound criticism. His *English Grammar* is said by Gifford to have been destroyed in the conflagration of his study. What we have, therefore, under that name, is, he thinks, to be considered as properly the materials of a more complete work that is lost. We have, as I apprehend, no earlier grammar upon so elaborate a plan: every rule is illustrated by examples, almost to redundancy; but he is too copious on what is common to other languages, and perhaps not full enough as to our peculiar idiom.

<sup>1</sup> ["*Timber*," I suppose, is meant as a ludicrous translation of *Sylva*. — 1842.]

## SECT. II.—ON FICTION.

Cervantes — French Romances — Calprenède — Scuderi — Latin and English Works of Fiction.

42. THE first part of *Don Quixote* was published in 1605. We have no reason, I believe, to suppose that it was written long before. It became immediately popular; and the admiration of the world raised up envious competitors, one of whom, *Avellanada*, published a continuation in a strain of invective against the author. *Cervantes*, who cannot be imagined to have ever designed the leaving his romance in so unfinished a state, took time about the second part, which did not appear till 1615.

43. *Don Quixote* is almost the only book in the Spanish language which can now be said to possess so much of an European reputation as to be popularly read in every country. It has, however, enjoyed enough to compensate for the neglect of the rest. It is to Europe in general what *Ariosto* is to Italy, and *Shakespeare* to England; the one book to which the slightest allusions may be made without affectation, but not missed without discredit. Numerous translations and countless editions of them, in every language, bespeak its adaptation to mankind: no critic has been paradoxical enough to withhold his admiration, no reader has ventured to confess a want of relish for that in which the young and old, in every climate, have, age after age, taken delight. They have doubtless believed, that they understood the author's meaning; and, in giving the reins to the gayety that his fertile invention and comic humor inspired, never thought of any deeper meaning than he announces, or delayed their enjoyment for any metaphysical investigation of his plan.

44. A new school of criticism, however, has of late years arisen in Germany, acute, ingenious, and sometimes eminently successful in philosophical, or, as they denominate it, æsthetic analysis of works of taste, but gliding too much into refinement and conjectural hypothesis, and with a tendency to mislead men of inferior capacities for this kind of investigation into mere paradox and absurdity. An instance is supplied, in my opinion, by some remarks of

Bouterwek, still more explicitly developed by Sismondi, on the design of Cervantes in *Don Quixote*, and which have been repeated in other publications. According to these writers, the primary idea is that of a "man of elevated character, excited by heroic and enthusiastic feelings to the extravagant pitch of wishing to restore the age of chivalry; nor is it possible to form a more mistaken notion of this work than by considering it merely as a satire, intended by the author to ridicule the absurd passion for reading old romances."<sup>1</sup> "The fundamental idea of *Don Quixote*," says Sismondi, "is the eternal contrast between the spirit of poetry and that of prose. Men of an elevated soul propose to themselves as the object of life to be the defenders of the weak, the support of the oppressed, the champions of justice and innocence. Like *Don Quixote*, they find on every side the image of the virtues they worship: they believe that disinterestedness, nobleness, courage, in short, knight-errantry, are still prevalent; and, with no calculation of their own powers, they expose themselves for an ungrateful world, they offer themselves as a sacrifice to the laws and rules of an imaginary state of society."<sup>2</sup>

45. If this were a true representation of the scheme of *Don Quixote*, we cannot wonder that some persons should, as M. Sismondi tells us they do, consider it as the most melancholy book that has ever been written. They consider it also, no doubt, one of the most immoral, as chilling and pernicious in its influence on the social converse of mankind, as the Prince of Machiavel is on their political intercourse. "Cervantes," he proceeds, "has shown us in some measure the vanity of greatness of soul and the delusion of heroism. He has drawn in *Don Quixote* a perfect man (*un homme accompli*), who is, nevertheless, the constant object of ridicule. Brave beyond the fabled knights he imitates, disinterested, honorable, generous, the most faithful and respectful of lovers, the best of masters, the most accomplished and well educated of gentlemen, all his enterprises end in discomfiture to himself, and in mischief to others." M. Sismondi descants upon the perfections of the Knight of La Mancha with a gravity which it is not quite easy for his readers to preserve.

46. It might be answered by a phlegmatic observer, that a mere enthusiasm for doing good, if excited by vanity, and

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, p. 394.

<sup>2</sup> *Littérature du Midi*, vol. III. p. 339.

not accompanied by common sense, will seldom be very servicable to ourselves or to others; that men who, in their heroism and care for the oppressed, would throw open the cages of lions, and set galley-slaves at liberty, not forgetting to break the limbs of harmless persons whom they mistake for wrong-doers, are a class of whom Don Quixote is the real type; and that, the world being much the worse for such heroes, it might not be immoral, notwithstanding their benevolent enthusiasm, to put them out of countenance by a little ridicule. This, however, is not, as I conceive, the primary aim of Cervantes; nor do I think that the exhibition of one great truth, as the predominant but concealed moral of a long work, is in the spirit of his age. He possessed a very thoughtful mind and a profound knowledge of humanity; yet the generalization which the hypothesis of Bouterwek and Sismondi requires for the leading conception of Don Quixote, besides its being a little inconsistent with the valorous and romantic character of its author, belongs to a more advanced period of philosophy than his own. It will at all events, I presume, be admitted, that we cannot reason about Don Quixote except from the book; and I think it may be shown in a few words, that these ingenious writers have been chiefly misled by some want of consistency which circumstances produced in the author's delineation of his hero.

47. In the first chapter of this romance, Cervantes, with a few strokes of a great master, sets before us the puerper gentleman, an early riser and keen sportsman, who, "when he was idle, which was most part of the year," gave himself up to reading books of chivalry till he lost his wits. The events that follow are in every one's recollection: his lunacy consists, no doubt, only in one idea; but this is so absorbing that it perverts the evidence of his senses, and predominates in all his language. It is to be observed, therefore, in relation to the nobleness of soul ascribed to Don Quixote, that every sentiment he utters is borrowed with a punctilious rigor from the romances of his library; he resorts to them on every occasion for precedents: if he is intrepidly brave, it is because his madness and vanity have made him believe himself unconquerable; if he bestows kingdoms, it is because Amadis would have done the same; if he is honorable, courteous, a redresser of wrongs, it is in pursuance of

Difference  
between  
the two  
parts.

these prototypes, from whom, except that he seems rather more scrupulous in chastity, it is his only boast not to diverge. Those who talk of the exalted character of Don Quixote seem really to forget, that, on these subjects, he has no character at all: he is the echo of romance; and to praise him is merely to say, that the tone of chivalry, which these productions studied to keep up, and, in the hands of inferior artists, foolishly exaggerated, was full of moral dignity, and has, in a subdued degree of force, modelled the character of a man of honor in the present day. But throughout the first two volumes of Don Quixote, though in a few unimportant passages he talks rationally, I cannot find more than two in which he displays any other knowledge, or strength of mind, than the original delineation of the character would lead us to expect.

48. The case is much altered in the last two volumes. Cervantes had acquired an immense popularity, and perceived the opportunity, of which he had already availed himself, that this romance gave for displaying his own mind. He had become attached to a hero who had made him illustrious, and suffered himself to lose sight of the clear outline he had once traced for Quixote's personality. Hence we find in all this second part, that, although the lunacy as to knights-errant remains unabated, he is, on all other subjects, not only rational in the low sense of the word, but clear, acute, profound, sarcastic, cool-headed. His philosophy is elevated, but not enthusiastic; his imagination is poetical, but it is restrained by strong sense. There are, in fact, two Don Quixotes: one, whom Cervantes first designed to draw, the foolish gentleman of La Mancha, whose foolishness had made him frantic; the other, a highly gifted, accomplished model of the best chivalry, trained in all the court, the camp, or the college could impart, but scathed in one portion of his mind by an inexplicable visitation of monomania. One is inclined to ask why this Don Quixote, who is Cervantes, should have been more likely to lose his intellects by reading romances than Cervantes himself. As a matter of bodily disease, such an event is doubtless possible; but nothing can be conceived more improper for fiction, nothing more incapable of affording a moral lesson, than the insanity which arises wholly from disease. Insanity is, in no point of view, a theme for ridicule; and this is an inherent fault of the romance (for those who have imagined that Cervantes has not rendered Quixote ridiculous



have a strange notion of the word); but the thoughtlessness of mankind, rather than their insensibility (for they do not connect madness with misery), furnishes some apology for the first two volumes. In proportion as we perceive, below the veil of mental delusion, a noble intellect, we feel a painful sympathy with its humiliation: the character becomes more complicated and interesting, but has less truth and naturalness: an objection which might also be made, comparatively speaking, to the incidents in the latter volumes, wherein I do not find the admirable probability that reigns through the former. But this contrast of wisdom and virtue with insanity in the same subject would have been repulsive in the primary delineation; as I think any one may judge, by supposing that Cervantes had, in the first chapter, drawn such a picture of Quixote as Bouterwek and Sismondi have drawn for him.

49. I must therefore venture to think, as, I believe, the world has generally thought for two centuries, that Cervantes had no more profound aim than he proposes to the reader. If the fashion of reading bad romances of chivalry perverted the taste of his contemporaries, and rendered their language ridiculous, it was natural that a zealous lover of good literature should expose this folly to the world by exaggerating its effects on a fictitious personage. It has been said by some modern writer, though I cannot remember by whom, that there was a *prose side* in the mind of Cervantes. There was indeed a side of calm strong sense, which some take for unpoetical. He thought the tone of those romances extravagant. It might naturally occur how absurd any one must appear who should attempt to realize in actual life the adventures of Amadis. Already a novelist, he perceived the opportunities this idea suggested. It was a necessary consequence that the hero must be represented as literally insane, since his conduct would have been extravagant beyond the probability of fiction on any other hypothesis; and from this happy conception germinated, in a very prolific mind, the whole history of Don Quixote. Its simplicity is perfect: no limit could be found save the author's discretion or sense that he had drawn sufficiently on his imagination; but the death of Quixote, which Cervantes has been said to have determined upon, lest some one else should a second time presume to continue the story, is in fact the only possible termination that could be given, after he had elevated the

character to that pitch of mental dignity which we find in the last two volumes.

50. Few books of moral philosophy display as deep an insight into the mechanism of the mind as Don Quixote. And when we look also at the fertility of invention, the general probability of the events, and the great simplicity of the story, wherein no artifices are practised to create suspense, or complicate the action, we shall think Cervantes fully deserving of the glory that attends this monument of his genius. It is not merely that he is superior to all his predecessors and contemporaries. This, though it might account for the European fame of his romance, would be an inadequate testimony to its desert. Cervantes stands on an eminence, below which we must place the best of his successors. We have only to compare him with Le Sage or Fielding, to judge of his vast superiority. To Scott, indeed, he must yield in the variety of his power; but, in the line of comic romance, we should hardly think Scott his equal.

51. The moral novels of Cervantes, as he calls them (Novellas Exemplares), are written, I believe, in a good style, but too short, and constructed with too little artifice to rivet our interest. Their simplicity and truth, as in many of the old novels, have a certain charin; but, in the present age, our sense of satiety in works of fiction cannot be overcome but by excellence. Of the Spanish comic romances, in the *picaresque* style, several remain: Justina was the most famous. One that does not strictly belong to this lower class is the Marcos de Obregon of Espinel. This is supposed to have suggested much to Le Sage in Gil Blas; in fact, the first story we meet with is that of Mergellina, the physician's wife. The style, though not dull, wants the grace and neatness of Le Sage. This is esteemed one of the best novels that Spain has produced. Italy was no longer the seat of this literature. A romance of chivalry by Marini (not the poet of that name), entitled Il Calandro (1640), was translated but indifferently into French by Scuderi, and has been praised by Salfi as full of imagination, with characters skilfully diversified, and an interesting, well-conducted story.<sup>1</sup>

Excellence  
of this  
romance.

Minor no-  
vels of  
Cervantes.

Other  
novels:  
Spanish.

And Italian.

<sup>1</sup> Salfi, vol. xiv. p. 88.

52. France, in the sixteenth century, content with *Amadis de Gaul* and the numerous romances of the Spanish school, had contributed very little to that literature. But now she had native writers of both kinds, the pastoral and heroic, who completely superseded the models they had before them. Their earliest essay was the *Astrée* of D'Urfé. Of this pastoral romance the first volume was published in 1610; the second, in 1620: three more came slowly forth, that the world might have due leisure to admire. It contains about 5,500 pages. It would be almost as discreditable to have read such a book through at present, as it was to be ignorant of it in the ages of Louis XIII. Allusions, however, to real circumstances served in some measure to lessen the insipidity of a love-story which seems to equal any in absurdity and want of interest. The style, and I can judge no farther, having read but a few pages, seems easy and not displeasing: but the pastoral tone is insufferably puerile; and a monotonous solemnity makes us almost suspect, that one source of its popularity was its gentle effect when read in small portions before retiring to rest. It was, nevertheless, admired by men of erudition, like Camus and Huet; or even by men of the world, like Rochefoucault.<sup>1</sup>

French romances:  
*Astrée*.

53. From the union of the old chivalrous romance with this newer style, the courtly pastoral, sprang another kind of fiction, the French heroic romance. Three nearly contemporary writers, Gomberville, Calprenède, Scuderi, supplied a number of voluminous stories, frequently historical in some of their names, but utterly destitute of truth in circumstances, characters, and manners. Gomberville led the way in his *Polexandre*, first published in 1632, and reaching in later editions to about 6,000 pages. "This," says a modern writer, "seems to have been the model of the works of Calprenède and Scuderi. This ponderous work may be regarded as a sort of intermediate production between the later compositions and the ancient fables of chivalry. It has, indeed, a close affinity to the heroic romance; but many of the exploits of the hero are as extravagant as those of a paladin or knight of the Round Table."<sup>2</sup> No romance in the language has so

Heroic romances.  
Gomberville.

<sup>1</sup> Dunlop's *History of Fiction*, vol. III. p. 184; *Biographie Universelle*; Boutevillain vol. v. p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> Dunlop, III. 230.

complex an intrigue, insomuch that it is followed with difficulty; and the author has in successive editions capriciously remodelled parts of his story, which is wholly of his own invention.<sup>1</sup>

54. Calprenède, a poet of no contemptible powers of imagination, poured forth his stores of rapid invention in several romances more celebrated than that of Gomberville. The first, which is contained in ten octavo volumes, is the *Cassandra*. This appeared in 1642, and was followed by the *Cleopatra*, published, according to the custom of romances, in successive parts, the earliest in 1646. La Harpe thinks this unquestionably the best work of Calprenède; Bouterwek seems to prefer the *Cassandra*; Pharriond is not wholly his own; five out of twelve volumes belong to one De Vauvorière, a continuator.<sup>2</sup> Calprenède, like many others, had but a life-estate in the temple of fame, and, more happy perhaps than greater men, lived out the whole favor of the world, which, having been largely showered on his head, strewed no memorials on his grave. It became, soon after his death, through the satire of Boileau and the influence of a new style in fiction, a matter of course to turn him into ridicule. It is impossible that his romances should be read again; but those who, for the purposes of general criticism, have gone back to these volumes, find not a little to praise in his genius, and in some measure to explain his popularity. "Calprenède," says Bouterwek, "belonged to the extravagant party, which endeavored to give a triumph to genius at the expense of taste, and by that very means played into the hands of the opposite party, which saw nothing so laudable as the observation of the rules which taste prescribed. We have only to become acquainted with any one of the prolix romances of Calprenède, such, for instance, as the *Cassandra*, to see clearly the spirit which animates the whole invention. We find there again the heroism of chivalry, the enthusiastic raptures of love, the struggle of duty with passion, the victory of magnanimity, sincerity, and humanity, over force, fraud, and barbarism, in the genuine characters and circumstances of romance. The events are skillfully interwoven; and a truly poetical keeping belongs to the whole, however extended it may be. The diction of Calprenède is a little monotonous, but not at all trivial,

<sup>1</sup> *Blaze. Univ.*

<sup>2</sup> *Dunlop, III. 259.*



and seldom affected. It is like that of old romance, grave, circumstantial, somewhat in the chronicle style, but picturesque, agreeable, full of sensibility and simplicity. Many passages might, if versified, find a place in the most beautiful poem of this class."<sup>1</sup>

55. The honors of this romantic literature have long been shared by the female sex. In the age of Richelieu and Mazarin, this was represented by Mademoiselle de Scuderi, a name very glorious for a season, but which unfortunately did not, like that of Calprenède, continue to be such during the whole life-time of her who bore it. The old age of Mademoiselle de Scuderi was ignominiously treated by the pitiless Boileau; and, reaching more than her ninetyeth year, she almost survived her only offspring, those of her pen. In her youth, she had been the associate of the Rambouillet circle, and caught perhaps in some measure from them what she gave back with interest,—a tone of perpetual affectation, and a pedantic gallantry, which could not withstand the first approach of ridicule. Her first romance was Ibrahim, published in 1635; but the more celebrated were the Grand Cyrus and the Clelie. Each of these two romances is in ten volumes.<sup>2</sup> The persons chiefly connected with the Hôtel Rambouillet sat for their pictures, as Persians or Babylonians, in Cyrus. Julie d'Angennes herself bore the name of Artenice, by which she was afterwards distinguished among her friends; and it is a remarkable instance not only of the popularity of these romances, but of the respectful sentiment, which, from the elevation and purity no one can deny them to exhibit, was always associated in the gravest persons with their fictions, that a prelate of eminent fame for eloquence, Fléchier, in his funeral sermon on this lady, calls her "the incomparable Artenice."<sup>3</sup> Such an allusion would appear to us misplaced; but we may presume that it was not so thought. Scuderi's romances seem to have been remarkably the favorites of the clergy: Huet, Mascaron, Godeau, as much as Fléchier, were her ardent admirers. "I find," says the second of these, one of the chief ornaments of the French pulpit, in writing to Mademoiselle de Scuderi, "so much in your works calculated to reform the world, that, in the sermons I am now

<sup>1</sup> Douterwek, vi. 280.

<sup>2</sup> Biogr. Univ. † Dunlop; Bouterwek.

<sup>3</sup> Sermons de Fléchier, II. 325 (edit. 1690). But probably Bossuet would not have stooped to this allusion.



preparing for the court, you will often be on my table by the side of St. Augustin and St. Bernard."<sup>1</sup> In the writings of this lady, we see the last footstep of the old chivalrous romance. She, like Calprenède, had derived from this source the predominant characteristics of her personages,—an exalted generosity, a disdain of all selfish considerations, a courage which attempts impossibilities and is rewarded by achieving them, a love outrageously hyperbolic in pretence, yet intrinsically without passion; all, in short, that Cervantes has bestowed on Don Quixote. Love, however, or its counterfeit, gallantry, plays a still more leading part in the French romance than in its Castilian prototype; the feats of heroes, though not less wonderful, are less prominent on the canvas; and a metaphysical pedantry replaces the pompous metaphors in which the knight of sorrowful countenance had taken so much delight. The approbation of many persons, far superior judges to Don Quixote, makes it impossible to doubt that the romances of Calprenède and Scuderi were better than his library. But, as this is the least possible praise, it will certainly not tempt any one away from the rich and varied repast of fiction which the last and present century have spread before him. Mademoiselle de Scuderi has perverted history still more than Calprenède, and changed her Romans into languishing Parisians. It is not to be forgotten, that the taste of her party, though it did not, properly speaking, infect Corneille, compelled him to weaken some of his tragedies. And this must be the justification of Boileau's cutting ridicule upon this truly estimable woman. She had certainly kept up a tone of severe and high morality, with which the aristocracy of Paris could ill dispense; but it was one not difficult to feign, and there might be Tartuffes of sentiment as well as of religion. Whatever is false in taste is apt to be allied to what is insincere in character.

56. The *Argenis* of Barclay, a son of the defender of royal authority against republican theories, is a Latin romance, superior perhaps to those after Cervantes, which the Spanish or French language could boast. It has indeed always been reckoned among political allegories. That

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Univ. Mademoiselle de Scuderi was not gifted by nature with beauty, or, as this biographer more bluntly says, "était d'une extrême laideur." She would probably have wished this to have been otherwise, but carried off the matter very

well, as appears by her epigram on her own picture by Nanteuil:

"Nanteuil en faisant mon image,  
A de son art divin signalé le pouvoir;  
Je hais mes yeux dans mon miroir,  
Je les aime dans son ouvrage."

the state of France in the last years of Henry III. is partially shadowed in it, can admit of no doubt: several characters are faintly veiled either by anagram or Greek translation of their names; but whether to avoid the insipidity of servile allegory, or to excite the reader by perplexity, Barclay has mingled so much of mere fiction with his story, that no attempts at a regular key to the whole work can be successful; nor in fact does the fable of this romance run in any parallel stream with real events. His object seems, in great measure, to have been the discussion of political questions in feigned dialogue. But, though in these we find no want of acuteness or good sense, they have not at present much novelty in our eyes; and though the style is really pleasing, or, as some have judged, excellent,<sup>1</sup> and the incidents not ill contrived, it might be hard to go entirely through a Latin romance of 700 pages, unless indeed we had no alternative given but the perusal of the similar works in Spanish or French. The *Argenis* was published at Rome in 1622: some of the personages introduced by Barclay are his own contemporaries; a proof that he did not intend a strictly historical allegory of the events of the last age. The *Euphormio* of the same author resembles in some degree the *Argenis*; but, with less of story and character, has a more direct reference to European politics. It contains much political disquisition; and one whole book is employed in a description of the manners and laws of different countries, with no disguise of names.

57. Campanella gave a loose to his fanciful humor in a fiction, entitled *The City of the Sun*, published at Frankfort in 1623, in imitation, perhaps, of the *Utopia*. *The City of the Sun* is supposed to stand upon a mountain situated in Ceylon, under the equator. A community of goods and women is established in this republic, the principal magistrate of which is styled Sun, and is elected after a strict examination in all kinds of science. Campanella has brought in so much of his own philosophical system, that we may presume that to have been the object of this romance. The Solara, he tells us, abstained at first from flesh, because they thought it cruel to kill animals. "But

<sup>1</sup> Coleridge has pronounced an ardent and rather excessive eulogy on the language of the *Argenis*, preferring it to that of *Ivry* or *Tahtus*. Coleridge's *Remarks*, vol. I. p. 267. I cannot by any means go this length: it has struck me that the

Latinity is more that of *Petrone's* *Arbiter*; but I am not well enough acquainted with that writer to speak confidently. The same observation seems applicable to the *Euphormio*.

afterwards considering that it would be equally cruel to kill plants, which are no less endowed with sensation, so that they must perish by famine, they understood that ignoble things were created for the use of nobler things, and now eat all things without scruple." Another Latin romance had some celebrity in its day, the *Monarchia Solipsorum*, a satire on the Jesuits in the fictitious name of Lucius Cornelius Europæus. It has been ascribed to more than one person: the probable author is one Scotti, who had himself belonged to the order.<sup>1</sup> This book did not seem to me in the least interesting: if it is so in any degree, it must be not as mere fiction, but as a revelation of secrets.

58. It is not so much an extraordinary as an unfortunate deficiency in our own literary annals, that England should have been destitute of the comic romance, or that derived from real life, in this period; since in fact we may say the same, as has been seen, of France. The *picaresque* novels of Spain were thought well worthy of translation; but it occurred to no one, or no one had the gift of genius, to shift the scene, and imitate their delineation of native manners. Of how much value would have been a genuine English novel, the mirror of actual life in the various ranks of society, written under Elizabeth or under the Stuarts! We should have seen, if the execution had not been very coarse, and the delineation absolutely confined to low characters, the social habits of our forefathers better than by all our other sources of that knowledge,—the plays, the letters, the traditions and anecdotes, the pictures or buildings, of the time. Notwithstanding the interest which all profess to take in the history of manners, our notions of them are generally meagre and imperfect; and hence modern works of fiction are but crude and inaccurate designs when they endeavor to represent the living England of two centuries since. Even Scott, who had a fine instinctive perception of truth and nature, and who had read much, does not appear to have seized the genuine tone of conversation, and to have been a little misled by the style of Shakspeare. This is rather elaborate and removed from vulgar use by a sort of archaism in phrase, and by a pointed turn in the dialogue, adapted to theatrical utterance, but wanting the ease of ordinary speech.

59. I can only produce two books by English authors, in

Few books  
of fiction in  
England.

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Univ. arts. "Scotti and Luchoffer;" *Niceron*, vols. xxxv. and xxxvi.

this first part of the seventeenth century, which fall properly under the class of novels or romances; and, of these, one is written in Latin. This is the *Mundus Alter et Idem* of Bishop Hall, an imitation of the latter and weaker volumes of Rabelais. A country in Terra Australis is divided into four regions, — Crapulia, Viraginia, Moronea, and Lavernia. Maps of the whole land and of particular regions are given; and the nature of the satire, not much of which has any especial reference to England, may easily be collected. It is not a very successful effort.

*Mundus  
Alter et  
Idem of  
Hall.*

60. Another prelate, or one who became such, Francis Godwin, was the author of a much more curious story. It is called the *Man in the Moon*, and relates the journey of one Domingo Gonzalez to that planet.

*Godwin's  
Journey to  
the Moon.*

This was written by Godwin, according to Antony Wood, while he was a student at Oxford.<sup>1</sup> By some internal proofs, it must have been later than 1599, and before the death of Elizabeth in 1603. But it was not published till 1638. It was translated into French, and became the model of Cyrano de Bergerac, as he was of Swift. Godwin himself had no prototype, as far as I know, but Lucian. He resembles those writers in the natural and veracious tone of his lies. The fiction is rather ingenious and amusing throughout; but the most remarkable part is the happy conjectures, if we must say no more, of his philosophy. Not only does the writer declare positively for the Copernican system, which was uncommon at that time, but he has surprisingly understood the principle of gravitation; it being distinctly supposed that the earth's attraction diminishes with the distance. Nor is the following passage less curious: "I must let you understand that the globe of the moon is not altogether destitute of an attractive power; but it is far weaker than that of the earth: as if a man do but spring upwards with all his force, as dancers do when they show their activity by capering, he shall be able to mount fifty or sixty feet high, and then he is quite beyond all attraction of the moon." By this device, Gonzalez returns from his sojourn in the latter, though it required a more complex one to bring him thither. "The moon," he observes, "is covered with a sea, except the parts

<sup>1</sup> *Athenæ Oxonienses*, vol. II. col. 558. It is remarkable that Mr. Dunlop has been ignorant of Godwin's claim to this work, and takes Dominic Gonzalez for the real author. *Hist. of Fiction*, III. 394



which seem somewhat darker to us, and are dry land." A contrary hypothesis came afterwards to prevail; but we must not expect every thing from our ingenious young student.

61. Though I can mention nothing else in English which comes exactly within our notions of a romance, we may advert to the Dodona's Grove of James Howell.

This is a strange allegory, without any ingenuity in maintaining the analogy between the outer and inner story, which alone can give a reader any pleasure in allegorical writing. The subject is the state of Europe, especially of England, about 1640, under the guise of animated trees in a forest. The style is like the following: "The next morning the royal olives sent some prime elms to attend Prince Rocolino in quality of officers of state; and, a little after, he was brought to the royal palace in the same state Elaianna's kings use to be attended the day of their coronation." The contrivance is all along so clumsy and unintelligible, the invention so poor and absurd, the story, if story there be, so dull an echo of well-known events, that it is impossible to reckon Dodona's Grove any thing but an entire failure. Howell has no wit; but he has abundance of conceits, flat and commonplace enough. With all this, he was a man of some sense and observation. His letters are entertaining; but they scarcely deserve consideration in this volume.

62. It is very possible that some small works belonging to this extensive class have been omitted, which my readers, or myself on second consideration, might think not unworthy of notice. It is also one so miscellaneous, that we might fairly doubt as to some which have a certain claim to be admitted into it. Such are the Adventures of the Baron de Faneste, by the famous Agrippa d'Aubigné (whose autobiography, by the way, has at least the liveliness of fiction); a singular book, written in dialogue, where an imaginary Gascon baron recounts his tales of the camp and the court. He is made to speak a patois not quite easy for us to understand, and not perhaps worth the while; but it seems to contain much that illustrates the state of France about the beginning of the seventeenth century. Much in this book is satirical; and the satire falls on the Catholics, whom Faneste, a mere foolish gentleman of Gascony, is made to defend against an acute Huguenot.

Howell's  
Dodona's  
Grove.

Adventures  
of Baron  
de Faneste.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## HISTORY OF MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCE FROM 1000 TO 1650

## SECTION I.

Invention of Logarithms by Napier — New Geometry of Kepler and Cavalieri — Algebra — Harriott — Descartes — Astronomy — Kepler — Galileo — Copernican System begins to prevail — Cartesian Theory of the World — Mechanical Discoveries of Galileo — Descartes — Hydrostatics — Optics.

1. In the last part of this work, we have followed the progress of mathematical and physical knowledge down to the close of the sixteenth century. The ancient geometers had done so much in their own province of lines and figures, that little more of importance could be effected, except by new methods extending the limits of the science, or derived from some other source of invention. Algebra had yielded a more abundant harvest to the genius of the sixteenth century; yet something here seemed to be wanting to give that science a character of utility and reference to general truth; nor had the formulæ of letters and radical signs that perceptible beauty which often wins us to delight in geometrical theorems of as little apparent usefulness in their results. Meanwhile, the primary laws, to which all mathematical reasonings in their relation to physical truths must be accommodated, lay hidden, or were erroneously conceived; and none of these latter sciences, with the exception of astronomy, were beyond their mere infancy, either as to observation or theory.<sup>1</sup>

State of  
science in  
sixteenth  
century.

2. Astronomy, cultivated in the latter part of the sixteenth century with much industry and success, was repressed, among other more insuperable obstacles, by the laborious calcula-

<sup>1</sup> In this chapter my obligations to Montucla are so numerous, that I shall seldom make particular references to his

*Histoire des Mathématiques*, which must be understood to be my principal authority as to facts.

tions that it required. The trigonometrical tables of sines, tangents, and secants, if they were to produce any tolerable accuracy in astronomical observation, must be computed to six or seven places of decimals, upon which the regular processes of multiplication and division were perpetually to be employed. The consumption of time as well as risk of error which this occasioned was a serious evil to the practical astronomer.

3. John Napier, laird of Merchiston, after several attempts to diminish this labor by devices of his invention, was happy enough to discover his famous method of logarithms. This he first published at Edinburgh in 1614, with the title, *Mirifici Logarithmorum Canonis Descriptio, seu Arithmeticarum Supputationum Mirabilis Abbrevisatio*. He died in 1618; and, in a posthumous edition entitled *Mirifici Logarithmorum Canonis Constructio*, 1619, the method of construction, which had been at first withheld, is given; and the system itself, in consequence, perhaps, of the suggestion of his friend Briggs, underwent some change.

4. The invention of logarithms is one of the rarest instances of sagacity in the history of mankind; and it has been justly noticed as remarkable, that it issued complete from the mind of its author, and has not received any improvement since his time. It is hardly necessary to say that logarithms are a series of numbers, arranged in tables parallel to the series of natural numbers, and of such a construction, that, by adding the logarithms of two of the latter, we obtain the logarithm of their product; by subtracting the logarithm of one number from that of another, we obtain that of their quotient. The longest processes, therefore, of multiplication and division are spared, and reduced to one of mere addition or subtraction.

5. It has been supposed, that an arithmetical fact, said to be mentioned by Archimedes, and which is certainly pointed out in the work of an early German writer, Michael Stifelius, put Napier in the right course for this invention. It will at least serve to illustrate the principle of logarithms. Stifelius shows, that, if in a geometrical progression we add the indices of any terms in the series, we shall obtain the index of the products of those terms. Thus, if we compare the geometrical progression, 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, with the arithmetical one which numbers

Tedious-  
ness of cal-  
culations.

Napier's in-  
vention of  
logarithms.

Their  
nature.

Property of  
numbers  
discovered  
by Stifelius.

the powers of the common ratio, namely, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, we see that by adding two terms of the latter progression, as 2 and 3, to which 4 and 8 correspond in the geometrical series, we obtain 5, to which 32, the product of 4 by 8, corresponds; and the quotient would be obtained in a similar manner. But though this, which becomes self-evident when algebraical expressions are employed for the terms of a series, seemed at the time rather a curious property of numbers in geometrical progression, it was of little value in facilitating calculation.

6. If Napier had simply considered numbers in themselves as repetitions of unity, which is their only intelligible definition, it does not seem that he could ever have carried this observation upon progressive series any farther. Numerically understood, the terms of a geometrical progression proceed *per saltum*; and, in the series 2, 4, 8, 16, it is as unmeaning to say that 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, in any possible sense, have a place, or can be introduced to any purpose, as that  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{8}$ ,  $\frac{1}{16}$ , or other fractions, are true numbers at all.<sup>1</sup> The case, however, is widely different when we use numbers as merely the signs of something capable of continuous increase or decrease; of space, of duration, of velocity. These are, for our convenience, divided by arbitrary intervals, to which the numerical unit is made to correspond. But, as these intervals are indefinitely divisible, the unit is supposed capable of division into fractional parts, each of them a representation of the ratio which a portion of the interval bears to the whole. And thus also we must see, that, as fractions of the unit bear a relation to uniform quantity, so all the integral numbers which do not enter into the terms of a geometrical progression correspond to certain portions of variable quantity. If a body falling down an inclined plane acquires a velocity at one point which would carry it through two feet in a second, and at

Extended  
to magi-  
tudes.

<sup>1</sup> Few books of arithmetic, or even algebra, draw the reader's attention at the outset to this essential distinction between discrete and continuous quantity, which is almost sure to be overlooked in all their subsequent reasonings. Wallis has done it properly: after stating very clearly that there are no proper numbers but integers, he meets the objection, that fractions are called intermediate numbers. "Concedo quidem sic responderi posse; concedo etiam numeros quos fractes vo-

cant, esse quidam uni et nulli quasi intermedios. Sed addo, quoniam transiunt eis *ἀπὸ τοῦ συνεχὸς*. Respondetur enim non de *quant.* sed de *quantitate*. Pertinet igitur hæc responsio proprie loquendo, non tam ad quantitatem discretam, seu numerum, quam ad continuum; prout hinc apponitur esse quid continuum in partes divisibile, quavis quidem harum partium ad totum ratio numeris exprimitur." — *Mathesis Universalis*, c. 1.

a lower point one which would carry it through four feet in the same time, there must, by the nature of a continually accelerated motion, be some point between these where the velocity might be represented by the number three. Hence, wherever the numbers of a common geometrical series, like 2, 4, 8, 16 represent velocities at certain intervals, the intermediate numbers will represent velocities at intermediate intervals; and thus it may be said, that all numbers are terms of a geometrical progression, but one which should always be considered as what it is,—a progression of continuous, not discrete quantity, capable of being indicated by number, but not number itself.

7. It was a necessary consequence, that, if all numbers could be treated as terms of a progression, and if their indices could be found like those of an ordinary series, the method of finding products of terms by addition of indices would be universal. The means that Napier adopted for this purpose were surprisingly ingenious; but it would be difficult to make them clear to those who are likely to require it, especially without the use of lines. It may suffice to say that his process was laborious in the highest degree, consisting of the interpolation of 6,931,472 mean proportionals between 1 and 2, and repeating a similar and still more tedious operation for all prime numbers. The logarithms of other numbers were easily obtained, according to the fundamental principle of the invention, by adding their factors. Logarithms appear to have been so called because they are the sum of these mean ratios, *λογων ὑποθμῶς*.

8. In the original tables of Napier, the logarithm of 10 was 2.3025850. In those published afterwards (1618), he changed this for 1.0000000; making, of course, that of 100, 2.0000000, and so forth. This construction has been followed since; but those of the first method are not wholly neglected: they are called hyperbolical logarithms from expressing a property of that curve. Napier found a coadjutor well worthy of him in Henry Briggs, professor of geometry at Gresham College. It is uncertain from which of them the change in the form of logarithms proceeded. Briggs, in 1618, published a table of logarithms up to 1,000, calculated by himself. This was followed in 1624 by his greater work, *Arithmetica Logarithmica*, containing the logarithms of all natural numbers as high as 20,000, and

Tables of  
Napier and  
Briggs.



again from 90,000 to 100,000. These are calculated to fourteen places of decimals; thus reducing the error, which, strictly speaking, must always exist from the principle of logarithmical construction, to an almost infinitesimal fraction. He had designed to publish a second table, with the logarithms of sines and tangents to the 100th part of a degree. This he left in a considerably advanced state; and it was published by Gellibrand in 1633. Gunter had, as early as 1620, given the logarithms of sines and tangents on the sexagesimal scale, as far as seven decimals. Vlaccq, a Dutch bookseller, printed in 1628 a translation of Briggs's *Arithmetica Logarithmica*, filling up the interval from 20,000 to 90,000, with logarithms calculated to eleven decimals. He published also, in 1633, his *Trigonometrica Artificialis*; the most useful work, perhaps, that had appeared, as it incorporated the labors of Briggs and Gellibrand. Kepler came like a master to the subject; and, observing that some foreign mathematicians disliked the theory upon which Napier had explained the nature of logarithms, as not rigidly geometrical, gave one of his own, to which they could not object. But it may probably be said, that the very novelty to which the disciples of the ancient geometry were averse, the introduction of the notion of velocity into mathematical reasoning, was that which linked the abstract science of quantity with nature, and prepared the way for that expansive theory of infinites, which bears at once upon the subtlest truths that can exercise the understanding, and the most evident that can fall under the senses.

9. It was, indeed, at this time that the modern geometry, which, if it deviates something from the clearness and precision of the ancient, has incomparably the advantage over it in its reach of application, took its rise. Kepler was the man that led the way. He published in 1615 his *Nova Stereometria Doliorum*, a treatise on the capacity of casks. In this he considers the various solids which may be formed by the revolution of a segment of a conic section round a line which is not its axis; a condition not unfrequent in the form of a cask. Many of the problems which he starts he is unable to solve. But what is most remarkable in this treatise is, that he here suggests the bold idea, that a circle may be deemed to be composed of an infinite number of triangles, having their bases in their circum-

Kepler's  
new geo-  
metry.



ference, and their common apex in the centre; a cone, in like manner, of infinite pyramids, and a cylinder of infinite prisms.<sup>1</sup> The ancients had shown, as is well known, that a polygon inscribed in a circle, and another described about it, may, by continual bisection of their sides, be made to approach nearer to each other than by any assignable difference. The circle itself lay, of course, between them. Euclid contents himself with saying, that the circle is greater than any polygon that can be inscribed in it, and less than any polygon that can be described about it. The method by which they approximated to the curve space by continual increase or diminution of the rectilinear figure was called exhaustion; and the space itself is properly called by later geometers the limit. As curvilinear and rectilinear spaces cannot possibly be compared by means of superposition, or by showing that their several constituent portions could be made to coincide, it had long been acknowledged by the best geometers impossible to quadrature by a direct process any curve surface. But Archimedes had found, as to the parabola, that there was a rectilinear space, of which he could indirectly demonstrate that it was equal, that is, could not be unequal, to the curve itself.

10. In this state of the general problem, the ancient methods of indefinite approximation having prepared the way, Kepler came to his solution of questions which regarded the capacity of vessels. According to Fabroni, he supposed solids to consist of an infinite number of surfaces, surfaces of an infinity of lines, lines of infinite points.<sup>2</sup> If this be strictly true, he must have left little, in point of invention, for Cavalieri. So long as geometry is employed as a method of logic, an exercise of the understanding on those modifications of quantity which the imagination cannot grasp, such as points, lines, infinities, it must appear almost an offensive absurdity to speak of a circle as a polygon with an infinite number of sides. But when it becomes the handmaid of practical art, or even of physical science, there can be no other objection than always arises from incongruity and incorrectness of language. It has been

<sup>1</sup> Fabroni, *Vita Italorum*, l. 272.  
<sup>2</sup> "Idem quoque solida cogitavit ex infinito numero superficierum consistere, superficies autem ex lineis infinitis, ac lineis ex infinitis punctis. Ostendit ipse quantum ea ratione brevior fieri via possit ad vera quædam captu difficiliora, cum

antiquarum demonstrationum circuitus ac methodus inter se comparandi figura circumscriptas et inscriptas his planis aut solidis, quæ memoranda essent, ita declinarentur."—Fabroni, *Vita Italorum* l. 272.

found possible to avoid the expressions attributed to Kepler; but they seem to denote, in fact, nothing more than those of Euclid or Archimedes,—that the difference between a magnitude and its limit may be regularly diminished, till, without strictly vanishing, it becomes less than any assignable quantity, and may consequently be disregarded in reasoning upon actual bodies.

11. Galileo, says Fabroni, trod in the steps of Kepler, and in his first dialogue on mechanics, when treating of <sup>Adopted by</sup> a cylinder cut out of an hemisphere, became con- Galileo. versant with indivisibles (*familiarem habere cœpit cum indivisibilibus usum*). But in that dialogue he confused the metaphysical notions of divisible quantity, supposing it to be composed of unextended indivisibles; and, not venturing to affirm that infinities could be equal or unequal to one another, he preferred to say that words denoting equality or excess could only be used as to finite quantities. In his fourth dialogue, on the centre of gravity, he comes back to the exhaustive method of Archimedes.<sup>1</sup>

12. Cavalieri, professor of mathematics at Bologna, the generally reputed father of the new geometry, though <sup>Extended by Cavalieri.</sup> Kepler seems to have so greatly anticipated him, had completed his *Method of Indivisibles* in 1626. The book was not published till 1635. His leading principle is, that solids are composed of an infinite number of surfaces placed one above another as their indivisible elements. Surfaces are formed in like manner by lines, and lines by points. This, however, he asserts with some excuse and explanation; declaring that he does not use the words so strictly as to have it supposed that divisible quantities truly and literally consist of indivisibles, but that the ratio of solids is the same as that of an infinite number of surfaces, and the ratio of surfaces the same as that of an infinite number of lines; and, to put an end to cavil, he demonstrated that the same consequences would follow, if a method should be adopted, borrowing nothing from the consideration of indivisibles.<sup>2</sup> This explanation

<sup>1</sup> Fabroni, *Vite Italorum*.

<sup>2</sup> "Non eo rigore a se voces adhiberi, ac si dividuæ quantitates verè ac propriè ex indivisibilibus existerent; verumtamen id sibi duntaxat velle, ut proportio solidorum eadem esset ac ratio superficialium omnium numero infinitarum: et proportio superficialium eadem ac illa

infinitarum linearum: denique ut omnia, quæ contra dici poterant, in radice præsiceret, demonstravit, eandem omnino consecutiones erui, si methodi aut rationes adhiberentur omnino diversæ, quæ nihil ab indivisibilibus consideratione penderent." — Fabroni.

"Il n'est aucun cas dans la géométrie

seems to have been given after his method had been attacked by Guldin in 1640.

13. It was a main object of Cavalieri's geometry to demonstrate the proportions of different solids. This is partly done by Euclid, but generally in an indirect manner. A cone, according to Cavalieri, is composed of an infinite number of circles decreasing from the base to the summit; a cylinder, of an infinite number of equal circles. He seeks, therefore, the ratio of the sum of all the former to that of all the latter. The method of summing an infinite series of terms in arithmetical progression was already known. The diameters of the circles in the cone decreasing uniformly were in arithmetical progression, and the circles would be as their squares. He found, that, when the number of terms is infinitely great, the sum of all the squares described on lines in arithmetical progression is exactly one-third of the greatest square multiplied by the number of terms. Hence the cone is one-third of a cylinder of the same base and altitude; and similar proof may be given as to the ratios of other solids.

14. This bolder geometry was now very generally applied in difficult investigations. A proof was given in the celebrated problems relative to the cycloid, which served as a test of skill to the mathematicians of that age. The cycloid is the curve described by a point in a circle, while it makes one revolution along an horizontal base, as in the case of a carriage-wheel. It was far more difficult to determine its area. It was at first taken for the segment of a circle. Galileo considered it, but with no success. Mersenne, who was also unequal to the problem, suggested it to a very good geometer, Roberval, who after some years, in 1634, demonstrated that the area of the cycloid is equal to thrice the area of the generating circle. Mersenne communicated this discovery to Descartes, who, treating the matter as easy, sent a short demonstration of his own. On Roberval's intimating that he had been aided by a knowledge of the solution, Descartes found out the tangents of the curve, and challenged Roberval and Fermat to do the same. Fermat succeeded in

des indivisibles, qu'on ne puisse facilement réduire à la forme ancienne de démonstration. Ainsi, c'est s'arrêter à l'écueil que de chicaner sur le mot d'indivisibles. Il est impropre si l'on veut, mais il n'en résulte aucun danger pour

la géométrie; et loin de conduire à l'erreur, cette méthode, au contraire, a été utile pour atteindre à des vérités qui avoient échappé jusqu'alors aux efforts des géomètres." — Montucla, vol. ii. p. 30.

this; but Roberval could not achieve the problem, in which Galileo also and Cavalieri failed, though it seems to have been solved afterwards by Viviani. "Such," says Montucla, "was the superiority of Descartes over all the geometers of his age, that questions which most perplexed them cost him but an ordinary degree of attention." In this problem of the tangents (and it might not perhaps have been worth while to mention it otherwise in so brief a sketch), Descartes made use of the principle introduced by Kepler, considering the curve as a polygon of an infinite number of sides, so that an infinitely small arc is equal to its chord. The cycloid has been called by Montucla the Helen of geometers. This beauty was at least the cause of war, and produced a long controversy. The Italians claim the original invention as their own; but Montucla seems to have vindicated the right of France to every solution important in geometry. Nor were the friends of Roberval and Fermat disposed to acknowledge so much of the exclusive right of Descartes as was challenged by his disciples. Pascal, in his history of the cycloid, enters the lists on the side of Roberval. This was not published till 1658.

15. Without dwelling more minutely on geometrical treatises of less importance, though in themselves valuable, such as that of Gregory St. Vincent in 1647, or Progress of Algebra. the *Cyclometricus* of Willebrod Snell in 1621, we come to the progress of analysis during this period. The works of Vieta, it may be observed, were chiefly published after the year 1600. They left, as must be admitted, not much in principle for the more splendid generalizations of Harriott and Descartes. It is not unlikely that the mere employment of a more perfect notation would have led the acute mind of Vieta to truths which seem to us who are acquainted with them but a little beyond what he discovered.

16. Briggs, in his *Arithmetica Logarithmica*, was the first who clearly showed what is called the Binomial Briggs; Girard. Theorem, or a compendious method of involution, by means of the necessary order of co-efficients in the successive powers of a binomial quantity. Cardan had partially, and Vieta more clearly, seen this; nor, as far as his notation went, was it likely to escape the profound mind of the latter. Albert Girard, a Dutchman, in his *Invention Nouvelle en Algèbre*, 1629, conceived a better notion of negative roots

than his predecessors. Even Vieta had not paid attention to them in any solution. Girard, however, not only assigns their form, and shows that, in a certain class of cubic equations, there must always be one or two of this description, but uses this remarkable expression: "A negative solution means in geometry that the *minus* recedes as the *plus* advances."<sup>1</sup> It seems manifest, that, till some such idea suggested itself to the minds of analysts, the consideration of negative roots, though they could not possibly avoid perceiving their existence, would merely have confused their solutions. It cannot, therefore, be surprising that not only Cardan and Vieta, but Harriott himself, should have paid little attention to them.

17. Harriott, the companion of Sir Walter Raleigh in Virginia, and the friend of the Earl of Northumberland, in whose house he spent the latter part of his life, was destined to make the last great discovery in the pure science of algebra. Though he is mentioned here after Girard, since the *Artis Analyticæ Praxis* was not published till 1631, this was ten years after the author's death. Harriott arrived at a complete theory of the genesis of equations, which Cardan and Vieta had but partially conceived. By bringing all the terms on one side, so as to make them equal to zero, he found out that every unknown quantity in an equation has as many values as the index of its powers in the first term denotes; and that these values, in a necessary sequence of combinations, form the co-efficients of the succeeding terms into which the decreasing powers of the unknown quantity enter, as they do also, by their united product, the last or known term of the equation. This discovery facilitated the solution of equations by the necessary composition of their terms which it displayed. It was evident, for example, that each integral root of an equation must be a factor, and consequently a divisor, of the last term.<sup>2</sup>

18. Harriott introduced the use of small letters instead of capitals in algebra; he employed vowels for unknown, consonants for known quantities, and joined them to express their

<sup>1</sup> "La solution par moins s'explique en géométrie en rétrogradant, et le moins recule ou le plus avance."—Montucla, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Harriott's book is a thin folio of a hundred and eighty pages, with very little besides examples; for his principles are shortly and obscurely laid down. Whiston is the author of the preface to this

work cannot be said to have suppressed or extenuated the merits of Vieta, or to have claimed any thing for Harriott but what he is allowed to have deserved. Montucla justly observes, that Harriott *very rarely* makes an equation equal to zero, by bringing all the quantities to one side of the equation.



product.<sup>1</sup> There is certainly not much in this; but its evident convenience renders it wonderful that it should have been reserved for so late an era. Wallis, in his *History of Algebra*, ascribes to Harriott a long list of discoveries, which have been reclaimed for Cardan and Vieta, the great founders of the higher algebra, by Cossali and Montucla.<sup>2</sup> The latter of these writers has been charged, even by foreigners, with similar injustice towards our countryman; and that he has been provoked by what he thought the unfairness of Wallis to something like a depreciation of Harriott, seems as clear as that he has himself robbed Cardan of part of his due credit in swelling the account of Vieta's discoveries. From the general integrity, however, of Montucla's writings, I am much inclined to acquit him of any wilful partiality.

19. Harriott had shown what were the hidden laws of algebra, as the science of symbolical notation. But Descartes one man, the pride of France and wonder of his contemporaries, was destined to flash light upon the labors of the analyst, and to point out what those symbols, so darkly and painfully traced, and resulting commonly in irrational or even impossible forms, might represent and explain. The use of numbers, or of letters denoting numbers, for lines and rectangles capable of division into aliquot parts, had long been too obvious to be overlooked, and is only a compendious abbreviation of geometrical proof. The next step made was the perceiving that irrational numbers, as they are called, represent incommensurable quantities; that is, if unity be taken for the side of a square, the square-root of two will represent its diagonal. Gradually, the application of numerical and algebraical calculation to the solution of problems respecting magnitude became more frequent and refined.<sup>3</sup> It is certain, however, that no one before Descartes had employed algebraic formulae in the construction of curves; that is, had taught the inverse process, not only how to express diagrams by algebra, but how to turn algebra into diagrams. The ancient geometers, he observes, were scrupulous about using the language of arithmetic in geometry,

<sup>1</sup> Oughtred, in his *Clavis Mathematicæ*, published in 1631, abbreviated the rules of Vieta, though he still used capital letters. He also gave succinctly the precepts of algebra, or the elementary rules we find in our common books, which, though what are now first learned, were, from the singular course of algebraical history,

discovered late. They are, however, given also by Harriott. Wallis's *Algebra*.

<sup>2</sup> These may be found in the article "Harriott" of the *Biographia Britannica*. Wallis, however, does not suppress the honor due to Vieta quite as much as is intimated by Montucla.

<sup>3</sup> See note in vol. II. p. 315

which could only proceed from their not perceiving the relation between the two; and this has produced a great deal of obscurity and embarrassment in some of their demonstrations.<sup>1</sup>

20. The principle which Descartes establishes is, that every curve of those which are called geometrical has its fundamental equation expressing the constant relation between the absciss and the ordinate. Thus the rectangle under the absciss of a diameter of the circle is equal to the square of the ordinate; and the other conic sections, as well as higher curves, have each their leading property, which determines their nature, and shows how they may be generated. A simple equation can only express the relation of straight lines: the solutions of a quadratic must be found in one of the four conic sections, and the higher powers of an unknown quantity lead to curves of a superior order. The beautiful and extensive theory developed by Descartes in this short treatise displays a most consummate felicity of genius. That such a man, endowed with faculties so original, should have encroached on the just rights of others, is what we can only believe with reluctance.

21. It must, however, be owned, that, independently of the suspicions of an unacknowledged appropriation of what others had thought before him, which unfortunately hang over all the writings of Descartes, he has taken to himself the whole theory of Harriott on the nature of equations, in a manner which, if it is not a remarkable case of simultaneous invention, can only be reckoned a very unwarrantable plagiarism. For not only he does not name Harriott, but he evidently introduces the subject as an important discovery of his own, and, in one of his letters, asserts his originality in the most positive language.<sup>2</sup> Still

<sup>1</sup> Œuvres de Descartes, v. 823.

<sup>2</sup> "Tant s'en faut que les choses que j'ai écrites puissent être aisément tirées de Viète, qu'au contraire ce qui est cause que mon traité est difficile à entendre, c'est que j'ai tâché à n'y rien mettre que ce que j'ai été n'avoir point été su ni par lui ni par aucun autre; comme on peut voir si on compare ce que j'ai écrit du nombre des racines qui sont en chaque équation, dans la page 372, qui est l'endroit où je commence à donner les règles de mon algèbre, avec ce que Viète en a écrit tout à la fin de son livre, De Emendatione Aequationum; car on verra que

je le détermine généralement toutes équations, au lieu que lui n'en ayant donné que quelques exemples particuliers, dont il fait toutefois si grand état qu'il a voulu conclure son livre par là, il a montré qu'il ne le pouvoit déterminer en général. Et ainsi j'ai commencé ça il avoit achevé, ce que j'ai fait toutefois sans y penser: car j'ai plus feuilleté Viète depuis que j'ai reçu votre dernière que je n'avois jamais fait auparavant, l'ayant trouvé ici par hasard entre les mains d'un de mes amis; et entre nous, je ne trouve pas qu'il en ait tant su que je pensois, nonobstant qu'il fût fort ha-

His appli-  
cation of  
algebra to  
curves.

Suspected  
plagiarism  
from Har-  
riott.

it is quite possible, that, prepared as the way had been by Vieta, and gifted as Descartes was with a wonderfully intuitive acuteness in all mathematical reasoning, he may in this, as in other instances, have divined the whole theory by himself. Montucla extols the algebra of Descartes, that is, so much of it as can be fairly claimed for him without any precursor, very highly; and some of his inventions in the treatment of equations have long been current in books on that science. He was the first who showed what were called impossible or imaginary roots, though he never assigns them, deeming them no quantities at all. He was also, perhaps, the first who fully understood negative roots, though he still retains the appellation, false roots, which is not so good as Harriott's epithet, privative. According to his panegyrist, he first pointed out, that, in every equation (the terms being all on one side) which has no imaginary roots, there are as many changes of signs as positive roots, as many continuations of them as negative.

22. The geometer next in genius to Descartes, and perhaps nearer to him than to any third, was Fermat, a man of various acquirements, of high rank in the Par-  
Fermat  
liament of Toulouse, and of a mind incapable of envy, forgiving of detraction, and delighting in truth, with almost too much indifference to praise. The works of Fermat were not published till long after his death in 1665; but his frequent discussions with Descartes, by the intervention of their common correspondent Mersenne, render this place more appropriate for the introduction of his name. In these controversies, Descartes never behaved to Fermat with the respect due to his talents: in fact, no one was ever more jealous of his own pre-eminence, or more unwilling to acknowledge the claims of those who scrupled to follow him implicitly, and who might in any manner be thought rivals of his fame. Yet it is this unhappy temper of Descartes which ought to render us more

ble." This is in a letter to Mersenne in 1637. (*Euvres de Descartes*, vol. vi. p. 300.)

The charge of plagiarism from Harriott was brought against Descartes in his life-time: Roberval, when an English gentleman showed him the *Artis Analyticæ Praxis*, exclaimed eagerly, "Il l'a vu! Il l'a vu!" It is also a very suspicious circumstance, if true, as it appears to be, that Descartes was in England the year (1631) that Harriott's work appeared. Carcavi, a friend of Roberval, in a letter

to Descartes in 1649, plainly intimates to him that he has only copied Harriott as to the nature of equations. (*Euvres de Descartes*, vol. x. p. 378. To this accusation Descartes made no reply. See *Biographia Britannica*, art. "Harriott." The *Biographie Universelle* unfairly suppresses all mention of this, and labors to depreciate Harriott.

See Leibnitz's catalogue of the supposed thefts of Descartes in vol. iii. p. 100 of this work.

slow to credit the suspicions of his designed plagiarism from the discoveries of others; since this, combined with his unwillingness to acknowledge their merits, and affected ignorance of their writings, would form a character we should not readily ascribe to a man of great genius, and whose own writings give many apparent indications of sincerity and virtue. But, in fact, there was in this age a great probability of simultaneous invention in science, from developing principles that had been partially brought to light. Thus Roberval discovered the same method of indivisibles as Cavalieri, and Descartes must equally have been led to his theory of tangents by that of Kepler. Fermat also, who was in possession of his principal discoveries before the geometry of Descartes saw the light, derived from Kepler his own celebrated method, *de maximis et minimis*; a method of discovering the greatest or least value of a variable quantity, such as the ordinate of a curve. It depends on the same principle as that of Kepler. From this he deduced a rule for drawing tangents to curves different from that of Descartes. This led to a controversy between the two geometers, carried on by Descartes, who yet is deemed to have been in the wrong, with his usual quickness of resentment. Several other discoveries, both in pure algebra and geometry, illustrate the name of Fermat.<sup>1</sup>

23. The new geometry of Descartes was not received with the universal admiration it deserved. Besides its conciseness, and the inroad it made on old prejudices as to geometrical methods, the general boldness of the author's speculations in physical and metaphysical philosophy, as well as his indiscreet temper, alienated many who ought to have appreciated it; and it was in his own country, where he had ceased to reside, that Descartes had the fewest admirers. Roberval made some objections to his rival's algebra, but with little success. A commentary on the treatise of Descartes by Schooten, professor of geometry at Leyden, first appeared in 1649.

24. Among those who devoted themselves ardently and successfully to astronomical observations at the end of the sixteenth century, was John Kepler, a native of Wirtemberg, who had already shown that he was likely to inherit the mantle of Tycho Brahe. He published some

<sup>1</sup> A good article on Fermat by M. Maurice will be found in the *Biographie Universelle*.



astronomical treatises of comparatively small importance in the first years of the present period; but in 1609 he made an epoch in that science by his *Astronomia Nova ἀνωλογητός*, or Commentaries on the Planet Mars. It had been always assumed, that the heavenly bodies revolve in circular orbits round their centre, whether this were taken to be the sun or the earth. There was, however, an apparent eccentricity or deviation from this circular motion, which it had been very difficult to explain; and, for this, Ptolemy had devised his complex system of epicycles. No planet showed more of this eccentricity than Mars; and it was to Mars that Kepler turned his attention. After many laborious researches, he was brought by degrees to the great discovery, that the motion of the planets, among which, having adopted the Copernican system, he reckoned the earth, is not performed in circular but in elliptical orbits, the sun not occupying the centre, but one of the foci of the curve; and, secondly, that it is performed with such a varying velocity, that the areas described by the radius-vector, or line which joins this focus to the revolving planet, are always proportional to the times. A planet, therefore, moves less rapidly as it becomes more distant from the sun. These are the first and second of the three great laws of Kepler. The third was not discovered by him till some years afterwards. He tells us himself, that on the 8th of May, 1618, after long toil in investigating the proportion of the periodic times of the planetary movements to their orbits, an idea struck his mind, which, chancing to make a mistake in the calculation, he soon rejected; but, a week after, returning to the subject, he entirely established his grand discovery, that the squares of the times of revolution are as the cubes of the mean distances of the planets. This was first made known to the world in his *Mysterium Cosmographicum*, published in 1619; a work mingled up with many strange effusions of a mind far more eccentric than any of the planets with which it was engaged. In the *Epitome Astronomiæ Copernicæ*, printed the same year, he endeavors to deduce this law from his theory of centrifugal forces. He had no small insight into the principles of universal gravitation, as an attribute of matter; but several of his assumptions as to the laws of motion are not consonant to truth. There seems, indeed, to have been a considerable degree of good fortune in the discoveries of Kepler; yet this may be



deemed the reward of his indefatigable laboriousness, and of the ingenuousness with which he renounced any hypothesis that he could not reconcile with his advancing knowledge of the phenomena.

25. The appearance of three comets in 1618 called once more the astronomers of Europe to speculate on the nature of those anomalous bodies. They still passed for harbingers of worldly catastrophes; and those who feared them least could not interpret their apparent irregularity. Galileo, though Tycho Brahe had formed a juster notion, unfortunately took them for atmospheric meteors. Kepler, though he brought them from the far regions of space, did not suspect the nature of their orbits, and thought that, moving in straight lines, they were finally dispersed, and came to nothing. But a Jesuit, Grassi, in a treatise, *De Tribus Cometis*, Rome, 1619, had the honor of explaining what had baffled Galileo, and first held them to be planets moving in vast ellipses round the sun.<sup>1</sup>

26. But, long before this time, the name of Galileo had become immortal by discoveries, which, though they would certainly have soon been made by some other, perhaps far inferior, observer, were happily reserved for the most philosophical genius of the age. Galileo assures us, that, having heard of the invention of an instrument in Holland which enlarged the size of distant objects, but knowing nothing of its construction, he began to study the theory of refractions, till he found by experiment, that, by means of a convex and concave glass in a tube, he could magnify an object threefold. He was thus encouraged to make another which magnified thirty times; and this he exhibited in the autumn of 1609 to the inhabitants of Venice. Having made a present of his first telescope to the senate, who rewarded him with a pension, he soon constructed another; and in one of the first nights of January, 1610, directing it towards the moon, was astonished to see her surface and edges covered with inequalities. These he considered to be mountains, and judged by a sort of measurement that some of them must exceed those of the earth. His next observation was of the milky way; and this he found to derive its nebulous lustre from myriads of stars not distinguishable, through their remoteness, by the unassisted sight of man. The nebulae in

Conjectures  
as to  
comets.

Galileo's  
discovery of  
Jupiter's  
satellites.

<sup>1</sup> The Biogr. Univ., art. "Grassi," ascribes this opinion to Tycho

the constellation Orion he perceived to be of the same character. Before his delight at these discoveries could have subsided, he turned his telescope to Jupiter, and was surprised to remark three small stars, which, in a second night's observation, had changed their places. In the course of a few weeks, he was able to determine by their revolutions, which are very rapid, that these are secondary planets, the moons or satellites of Jupiter; and he had added a fourth to their number. These marvellous revelations of nature he hastened to announce in a work, aptly entitled *Sidereus Nuncius*, published in March, 1610. In an age when the fascinating science of astronomy had already so much excited the minds of philosophers, it may be guessed with what eagerness this intelligence from the heavens was circulated. A few, as usual, through envy or prejudice, affected to condemn it. But wisdom was justified of her children. Kepler, in his *Narratio de Observationibus a se Quatuor Jovis Satellitibus*, 1610, confirmed the discoveries of Galileo. Peiresc, an inferior name no doubt, but deserving of every praise for his zeal in the cause of knowledge, having with difficulty procured a good telescope, saw the four satellites in November, 1610; and is said by Gassendi to have conceived at that time the ingenious idea, that their occultations might be used to ascertain the longitude.<sup>1</sup>

27. This is the greatest and most important of the discoveries of Galileo. But several others were of the deepest interest. He found that the planet Venus had phases, that is, periodical differences of apparent form, like the moon; and that these are exactly such as would be produced by the variable reflection of the sun's light on the Copernican hypothesis; ascribing also the faint light on that part of the moon which does not receive the rays of the sun, to the reflection from the earth, called by some late writers earth-shine; which, though it had been suggested by Mustlin, and before him by Leonardo da Vinci, was not generally received among astronomers. Another striking phenomenon, though he did not see the means of explaining it, was the triple appearance of Saturn, as if smaller stars were conjoined, as it were, like wings to the planet. This, of course, was the ring.

28. Meantime the new auxiliary of vision which had

Other discoveries by him.

<sup>1</sup> Gassendi, *Vita Peirescii*, p. 77.

revealed so many wonders could not lie unemployed in the hands of others. A publication by John Fabricius at Wittenberg, in July, 1611, *De Maculis in Sole visis*, announced a phenomenon in contradiction of common prejudice. The sun had passed for a body of liquid flame, or, if thought solid, still in a state of perfect ignition. Kepler had some years before observed a spot, which he unluckily mistook for the orb of Mercury in its passage over the solar orb. Fabricius was not permitted to claim this discovery as his own. Scheiner, a Jesuit, professor of mathematics at Ingolstadt, asserts, in a letter dated 12th of November, 1611, that he first saw the spots in the month of March in that year; but he seems to have paid little attention to them before that of October. Both Fabricius, however, and Scheiner, may be put out of the question. We have evidence that Harriott observed the spots on the sun as early as December 8th, 1610.<sup>1</sup> The motion of the spots suggested the revolution of the sun round its axis completed in twenty-four days, as it is now determined; and their frequent alterations of form as well as occasional disappearance could only be explained by the hypothesis of a luminous atmosphere in commotion, a sea of flame, revealing at intervals the dark central mass of the sun's body which it envelops.

29. Though it cannot be said, perhaps, that the discoveries of Galileo would fully prove the Copernican system of the world to those who were already insensible to reasoning from its sufficiency to explain the phenomena, and from the analogies of nature, they served to familiarize the mind to it, and to break down the strong rampart of prejudice which stood in its way. For eighty years, it has been said, this theory of the earth's motion had been maintained without censure; and it could only be the greater boldness of Galileo in its assertion which drew down upon him the notice of the church. But, in these eighty years since the publication of the treatise of Copernicus, his proselytes had been surprisingly few. They were now becoming more numerous: several had written on that side; and Galileo had begun to form a school of Copernicans who were spreading over Italy. The Lincean society, one of the most useful and renowned of Italian academies, founded at Rome

<sup>1</sup> [Montucla, H. 106; Hutton's Dictionary, art. "Harriott." The claim of Harriott had been established by Zach, in Berlin Transactions for 1788. — 1842.]

Copernican  
system held  
by Galileo.

Spots of the  
sun discovered.

by Frederic Cesi, a young man of noble birth, in 1603, had as a fundamental law to apply themselves to natural philosophy; and it was impossible that so attractive and rational a system as that of Copernicus could fail of pleasing an acute and ingenious nation strongly bent upon science. The church, however, had taken alarm: the motion of the earth was conceived to be as repugnant to Scripture as the existence of antipodes had once been reckoned; and, in 1616, Galileo, though respected, and in favor with the court of Rome, was compelled to promise that he would not maintain that doctrine in any manner. Some letters that he had published on the subject were put, with the treatise of Copernicus and other works, into the Index Expurgatorius, where, I believe, they still remain.<sup>1</sup>

30. He seems, notwithstanding this, to have flattered himself, that, after several years had elapsed, he might elude the letter of this prohibition by throwing the arguments in favor of the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems into the form of a dialogue. This was published in 1632; and he might, from various circumstances, not unreasonably hope for impunity. But his expectations were deceived. It is well known that he was compelled by the Inquisition at Rome, into whose hands he fell, to retract in the most solemn and explicit manner the propositions he had so well proved, and which he must have still believed. It is unnecessary to give a circumstantial account, especially as it has been so well done in the Life of Galileo by the late Mr. Drinkwater Bethune. The Papal court meant to humiliate Galileo, and through him to strike an increasing class of philosophers with shame and terror; but not otherwise to punish one of whom even the inquisitors must, as Italians, have been proud: his confinement, though Montucla says it lasted for a year, was very short. He continued, nevertheless, under some restraint for the rest of his life, and, though he

His dialogue, and persecution

<sup>1</sup> Drinkwater Bethune's Life of Galileo; Fabroni, *Vite Italiane*, vol. i. The former seems to be mistaken in supposing that Galileo did not endeavor to prove his system compatible with Scripture. In a letter to Christina, the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, the author (Breuna) of the Life in Fabroni's work tells us, he argued very elaborately for that purpose. "In eadem videlicet epistola philosophus noster ita disertè, ut nihil etiam ab hominibus, qui omnem in sacrarum literarum studio

consumpissent etatem, aut subtilius aut verius aut etiam accuratius explicatum expectari poterit." — p. 118. It seems, in fact, to have been this over-desire to prove his theory orthodox, which incensed the church against it. See an extraordinary article on this subject in the eighth number of the Dublin Review (1838). Many will tolerate propositions inconsistent with orthodoxy, when they are not brought into immediate juxtaposition with it.

lived at his own villa near Florence, was not permitted to enter the city.<sup>1</sup>

31. The church was not mistaken in supposing that she should intimidate the Copernicans, but very much so in expecting to suppress the theory. Descartes was so astonished at hearing of the sentence on Galileo, that he was almost disposed to burn his papers, or at least to let no one see them. "I cannot collect," he says, "that he who is an Italian, and a friend of the pope, as I understand, has been criminated on any other account than for having attempted to establish the motion of the earth. I know that this opinion was formerly censured by some cardinals; but I thought I had since heard that no objection was now made to its being publicly taught even at Rome."<sup>2</sup> It seems not at all unlikely that Descartes was induced, on this account, to pretend a greater degree of difference from Copernicus than he really felt, and even to deny, in a certain sense of his own, the obnoxious tenet of the earth's motion.<sup>3</sup> He was not without danger of a sentence against truth nearer at hand; Cardinal Richelieu having had the intention of procuring a decree of the Sorbonne to the same effect, which, through the good sense of some of that society, fell to the ground.<sup>4</sup>

32. The progress, however, of the Copernican theory in Europe, if it may not actually be dated from its condemnation at Rome, was certainly not at all slower after that time. Gassendi rather cautiously took that side; the Cartesians brought a powerful re-enforcement; Bouillaud and several other astronomers of note avowed themselves favorable to a doctrine, which, though in Italy it lay under the ban of the Papal power, was readily saved on this side of the Alps by some of the salutary distinctions long in use to evade that authority.<sup>5</sup> But in the middle of the seventeenth century, and long afterwards, there were mathe-

<sup>1</sup> Fabrini. His Life is written in good Latin, with knowledge and spirit, more than Tiraboschi has ventured to display.

It appears from some of Grotius's Epistles, that Galileo had thoughts, about 1635, of seeking the protection of the United Provinces. But, on account of his advanced age, he gave this up: "Fœdus senio constituit manere in quibus est locus, et potius que ibi sunt incommoda perpeti, quam male ætati migrandi onus, et novas parandi amicitias imponere."

The very idea shows that he must have deeply felt the restraint imposed upon him in his country. Epist. Grot., 407, 441.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. vi. p. 230: he says here of the motion of the earth. "Je confesse que s'il est faux, tous les fondemens de ma philosophie le sont aussi."

<sup>3</sup> Vol. vi. p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> Montucla, li. 297.

<sup>5</sup> Id., li. 50.



maticians, of no small reputation, who struggled stanchly for the immobility of the earth; and, except so far as Cartesian theories might have come in vogue, we have no reason to believe that any persons unacquainted with astronomy, either in this country or on the Continent, had embraced the system of Copernicus. Hume has censured Bacon for rejecting it; but, if Bacon had not done so, he would have anticipated the rest of his countrymen by a full quarter of a century.

33. Descartes, in his new theory of the solar system, aspired to explain the secret springs of nature, while Kepler and Galileo had merely showed their effects. By what force the heavenly bodies were impelled, by what law they were guided, was certainly a very different question from that of the orbit they described or the period of their revolution. Kepler had evidently some notion of that universally mutual gravitation which Hooke saw more clearly, and Newton established on the basis of his geometry.<sup>1</sup> But Descartes rejected this with contempt. "For," he says, "to conceive this, we must not only suppose that every portion of matter in the universe is animated, and animated by several different souls which do not obstruct one another, but that those souls are intelligent, and even divine; that they may know what is going on in the most remote places without any messenger to give them notice, and that they may exert their powers there."<sup>2</sup> Kepler, who took the world for a single animal, a leviathan that roared in caverns and breathed in the ocean-tides, might have found it difficult to answer this, which would have seemed no objection at all to Campanella. If Descartes himself had been more patient towards opinions which he had not formed in his own mind, that constant divine agency, to which he was, on other occasions, apt to resort, could not but have suggested a sufficient explanation of the gravity of matter, without endowing it with self-agency. He had, however, fallen upon a complicated and original scheme, the most celebrated, perhaps, though not the most admirable, of the novelties which Descartes brought into philosophy.

34. In a letter to Mersenne, Jan. 9th, 1639, he shortly states that notion of the material universe which he afterwards

Descartes  
denies gen-  
eral gra-  
vitation

<sup>1</sup> "If the earth and moon," he says, "were not retained in their orbits, they would fall one on another; the moon moving about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way, the earth the rest, supposing them equally dense." By

this attraction of the moon, he accounts for tides. He compares the attraction of the planet towards the sun to that of heavy bodies towards the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ix. p. 560.

published in the *Principia Philosophiæ*. "I will tell you," he says, "that I conceive, or rather I can demonstrate, that, besides the matter which composes terrestrial bodies, there are two other kinds: one very subtle, of which the parts are round, or nearly round, like grains of sand, and this not only occupies the pores of terrestrial bodies, but constitutes the substance of all the heavens; the other incomparably more subtle, the parts of which are so small, and move with such velocity, that they have no determinate figure, but readily take at every instant that which is required to fill all the little intervals which the other does not occupy."<sup>1</sup> To this hypothesis of a double ether he was driven by his aversion to admit any vacuum in nature; the rotundity of the former corpuscles having been produced, as he fancied, by their continual circular motions, which had rubbed off their angles. This seems at present rather a clumsy hypothesis; but it is literally that which Descartes presented to the world.

35. After having thus filled the universe with different sorts of matter, he supposes that the subtler particles, formed by the perpetual rubbing-off of the angles of the larger in their progress towards sphericity, increased by degrees till there was a superfluity that was not required to fill up the intervals; and this, flowing towards the centre of the system, became the sun, a very subtle and liquid body; while in like manner the fixed stars were formed in other systems. Round these centres the whole mass is whirled in a number of distinct vortices, each of which carries along with it a planet. The centrifugal motion impels every particle in these vortices at each instant to fly off from the sun in a straight line; but it is retained by the pressure of those which have already escaped and form a denser sphere beyond it. Light is no more than the effect of particles seeking to escape from the centre, and pressing one on another, though perhaps without actual motion.<sup>2</sup> The planetary vortices contain sometimes smaller vortices, in which the satellites are whirled round their principal.

36. Such, in a few words, is the famous Cartesian theory, which, fallen in esteem as it now is, stood its ground on the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. viii. p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> "J'ai souvent averti que par la lumière je n'entendois pas tant le mouvement que cette inclination ou propension que ces petits corps ont à se mouvoir, et que ce que je disois du mouvement, pour

être plus aisément entendu, se devoit rapporter à cette propension; d'où il est manifeste que selon moi l'on ne doit entendre autre chose par les couleurs que les différentes variétés qui arrivent en ces propensions." — Vol. vii. p. 198.

continent of Europe for nearly a century, till the simplicity of the Newtonian system, and, above all, its conformity to the reality of things, gained an undisputed predominance. Besides the arbitrary suppositions of Descartes, and the various objections that were raised against the absolute plenum of space and other parts of his theory, it has been urged that his vortices are not reconcilable, according to the laws of motion in fluids, with the relation, ascertained by Kepler, between the periods and distances of the planets; nor does it appear why the sun should be in the focus, rather than in the centre of their orbits. Yet within a few years it has seemed not impossible that a part of his bold conjectures will enter once more with soberer steps into the schools of philosophy. His doctrine as to the nature of light, improved as it was by Huygens, is daily gaining ground over that of Newton; that of a subtle ether pervading space, which in fact is nearly the same thing, is becoming a favorite speculation, if we are not yet to call it an established truth; and the affirmative of a problem which an eminent writer has started, whether this ether has a vorticose motion round the sun, would not leave us very far from the philosophy which it has been so long our custom to turn into ridicule.

37. The passage of Mercury over the sun was witnessed by Gassendi in 1631. This phenomenon, though it excited great interest in that age, from its having been previously announced, so as to furnish a test of astronomical accuracy, recurs too frequently to be now considered as of high importance. The transit of Venus is much more rare. It occurred on Dec. 4, 1639, and was then only seen by Horrox, a young Englishman of extraordinary mathematical genius. There is reason to ascribe an invention of great importance, though not perhaps of extreme difficulty, — that of the micrometer, — to Horrox.

Transits of  
Mercury  
and Venus

38. The satellites of Jupiter and the phases of Venus are not so glorious in the scutcheon of Galileo as his discovery of the true principles of mechanics. These, as we have seen in the preceding volume, were very imperfectly known till he appeared; nor had the additions to that science since the time of Archimedes been important. The treatise of Galileo, *Della Scienza Meccanica*, has been said, I know not on what authority, to have been written in 1592. It was not published, however, till 1634, and then only in a

Laws of  
mechanics

French translation by Mersenne; the original not appearing till 1649. This is chiefly confined to statics, or the doctrine of equilibrium: it was in his dialogues on motion, *Della Nuova Scienza*, published in 1638, that he developed his great principles of the science of dynamics, the moving forces of bodies. Galileo was induced to write his treatise on mechanics, as he tells us, in consequence of the fruitless attempts he witnessed in engineers to raise weights by a small force, "as if with their machines they could cheat nature, whose instinct as it were by fundamental law is, that no resistance can be overcome except by a superior force." But as one man may raise a weight to the height of a foot by dividing it into equal portions, commensurate to his power, which many men could not raise at once; so a weight, which raises another greater than itself, may be considered as doing so by successive instalments of force, during each of which it traverses as much space as a corresponding portion of the larger weight. Hence the velocity, of which space uniformly traversed in a given time is the measure, is inversely as the masses of the weights; and thus the equilibrium of the straight lever is maintained, when the weights are inversely as their distance from the fulcrum. As this equilibrium of unequal weights depends on the velocities they would have if set in motion, its law has been called the principle of virtual velocities. No theorem has been of more important utility to mankind. It is one of those great truths of science, which, combating and conquering enemies from opposite quarters, — prejudice and empiricism, — justify the name of philosophy against both classes. The waste of labor and expense in machinery would have been incalculably greater in modern times, could we imagine this law of nature not to have been discovered; and, as their misapplication prevents their employment in a proper direction, we owe, in fact, to Galileo the immense effect which a right application of it has produced. It is possible that Galileo was ignorant of the demonstration given by Stevinus of the law of equilibrium in the inclined plane. His own is different; but he seems only to consider the case when the direction of the force is parallel to that of the plane.

39. Still less was known of the principles of dynamics than of those of statics, till Galileo came to investigate them. The acceleration of falling bodies, whether perpendicularly



or on inclined planes, was evident; but, in what ratio this took place, no one had succeeded in determining. His dynamics—though many had offered conjectures. He showed that the velocity acquired was proportional to the time from the commencement of falling. This might now be demonstrated from the laws of motion; but Galileo, who did not perhaps distinctly know them, made use of experiment. He then proved by reasoning that the spaces traversed in falling were as the squares of the times or velocities; that their increments in equal times were as the uneven numbers, 1, 3, 5, 7, and so forth; and that the whole space was half what would have been traversed uniformly from the beginning with the final velocity. These are the great laws of accelerated and retarded motion, from which Galileo deduced most important theorems. He showed that the time in which bodies roll down the length of inclined planes is equal to that in which they would fall down the height, and in different planes is proportionate to the height; and that their acquired velocity is in the same ratios. In some propositions he was deceived; but the science of dynamics owes more to Galileo than to any one philosopher. The motion of projectiles had never been understood: he showed it to be parabolic; and, in this, he not only necessarily made use of a principle of vast extent, that of compound motion (which, though it is clearly mentioned in one passage by Aristotle,<sup>1</sup> and may probably be implied, or even asserted, in the reasonings of others, as has been observed in another place with respect to Jordano Bruno, does not seem to have been explicitly laid down by modern writers on mechanical science), but must have seen the principle of curvilinear deflection by forces acting in infinitely small portions of time. The ratio between the times of vibration in pendulums of unequal length had early attracted Galileo's attention. But he did not reach the geometrical exactness of which this subject is capable.<sup>2</sup> He developed a new principle as to the resistance of solids to the fracture of their parts, which, though Descartes as usual treated it with scorn, is now established in philosophy. "One forms, however," says Playfair, "a very imperfect idea of this philosopher from considering the discoveries and inventions, numerous and splendid as they are, of which he was the undisputed author. It is by following his reasonings, and by pursuing the train of his thoughts,

<sup>1</sup> Drinkwater's *Life of Galileo*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Febronii*.



in his own elegant though somewhat diffuse exposition of them, that we become acquainted with the fertility of his genius, with the sagacity, penetration, and comprehensiveness of his mind. The service which he rendered to real knowledge is to be estimated not only from the truths which he discovered, but from the errors which he detected; not merely from the sound principles which he established, but from the pernicious idols which he overthrew. Of all the writers who have lived in an age which was yet only emerging from ignorance and barbarism, Galileo has most entirely the tone of true philosophy, and is most free from any contamination of the times, in taste, sentiment, and opinion."<sup>1</sup>

40. Descartes, who left nothing in philosophy untouched, turned his acute mind to the science of mechanics, sometimes with signal credit, sometimes very unsuccessfully. He reduced all statics to one principle, — that it requires as much force to raise a body to a given height as to raise a body of double weight to half the height. This is the theorem of virtual velocities in another form. In many respects he displays a jealousy of Galileo, and an unwillingness to acknowledge his discoveries, which puts himself often in the wrong. "I believe," he says, "that the velocity of very heavy bodies which do not move very quickly in descending increases nearly in a duplicate ratio; but I deny that this is exact, and I believe that the contrary is the case when the movement is very rapid."<sup>2</sup> This recourse to the air's resistance, a circumstance of which Galileo was well aware, in order to diminish the credit of a mathematical theorem, is unworthy of Descartes; but it occurs more than once in his letters. He maintained also, against the theory of Galileo, that bodies do not begin to move with an infinitely small velocity, but have a certain degree of motion at the first instance which is afterwards accelerated.<sup>3</sup> In this too, as he meant to extend his theory to falling bodies, the consent of philosophers has decided the question against him. It was a corollary from these notions, that he denies the increments of spaces to be according to the progression of uneven numbers.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary Dissertation to Encyclop. Britan.

<sup>2</sup> Œuvres de Descartes, vol. viii. p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> "Il faut savoir, quoique Galilée et quelques autres disent au contraire, que le corps qui commencent à descendre, ne se meut en quelque façon que en

soit, ne passent point par tous les degrés de tardivité; mais que dès le premier moment ils ont certaine vitesse qui s'augmente après de beaucoup, et c'est de cette augmentation que vient la force de la percussion." — viii. 141.

<sup>4</sup> "Cette proportion d'augmentation se

Nor would he allow that the velocity of a body augments its force, though it is a concomitant.<sup>1</sup>

41. Descartes, however, is the first who laid down the laws of motion; especially that all bodies persist in their present state of rest or uniform rectilinear motion till affected by some force. Many had thought, as the vulgar always do, that a continuance of rest was natural to bodies, but did not perceive that the same principle of inertia or inactivity was applicable to them in rectilinear motion. Whether this is deducible from theory, or depends wholly on experience, by which we ought to mean experiment, is a question we need not discuss. The fact, however, is equally certain; and hence Descartes inferred that every curvilinear deflection is produced by some controlling force, from which the body strives to escape in the direction of a tangent to the curve. The most erroneous part of his mechanical philosophy is contained in some propositions as to the collision of bodies, so palpably incompatible with obvious experience that it seems truly wonderful he could ever have adopted them. But he was led into these paradoxes by one of the arbitrary hypotheses which always governed him. He fancied it a necessary consequence, from the immutability of the divine nature, that there should be at all times the same quantity of motion in the universe; and, rather than abandon this singular assumption, he did not hesitate to assert, that two hard bodies striking each other in opposite directions would be reflected with no loss of velocity; and, what is still more outrageously paradoxical, that a smaller body is incapable of communicating motion to a greater; for example, that the red billiard-ball cannot put the white into motion. This manifest absurdity he endeavored to remove by the arbitrary supposition, that when we see, as we constantly do, the reverse of his theorem take place, it is owing to the air, which, according to him, renders bodies more susceptible of motion than they would naturally be.

Laws of  
motion laid  
down by  
Descartes.

ion les nombres impaire, 1, 3, 5, 7, &c., qui est dans Galilée, et que je crois vous avoir aussi écrite antérieurement, ne peut être vraie, qu'en supposant deux ou trois choses qui sont très fausses, dont l'une est que le mouvement croisse par degrés depuis le plus lent, ainsi que le songe Galilée, et l'autre que la résistance de l'air n'empêche point." — Vol. ix. p. 349.

<sup>1</sup> "Je pense que la vitesse n'est pas la

cause de l'augmentation de la force, en core qu'elle l'accompagne toujours." — Id., p. 350. See also vol. viii. p. 14. He was probably perplexed by the metaphysical notion of emanation, which he knew not how to ascribe to mere velocity. The fact that increased velocity is a condition or antecedent of augmented force could not be doubted.

42. Though Galileo, as well as others, must have been acquainted with the laws of the composition of moving forces, it does not appear that they had ever been so distinctly enumerated as by Descartes, in a passage of his *Dioptrics*.<sup>1</sup> That the doctrine was in some measure new, may be inferred from the objections of Fermat; and Clerselier, some years afterwards, speaks of persons "not much versed in mathematics, who cannot understand an argument taken from the nature of compound motion."<sup>2</sup>

43. Roberval demonstrated what seems to have been assumed by Galileo, and is immediately deducible from the composition of forces, that weights on an oblique or crooked lever balance each other, when they are inversely as the perpendiculars drawn from the centre of motion to their direction. Fermat, more versed in geometry than physics, disputed this theorem, which is now quite elementary. Descartes, in a letter to Mersenne, ungraciously testifies his agreement with it.<sup>3</sup> Torricelli, the most illustrious disciple of Galileo, established, that, when weights balance each other in all positions, their common centre of gravity does not ascend or descend, and conversely.

44. Galileo, in a treatise entitled *Delle Cose che stanno nell' Acqua*, lays down the principles of hydrostatics already established by Stevin, and, among others, what is called the hydrostatical paradox. Whether he was acquainted with Stevin's writings may be perhaps doubted: it does not appear that he mentions them. The more difficult science of hydraulics was entirely created by two disciples of Galileo, — Castellio and Torricelli. It is one everywhere of high importance, and especially in Italy. The work of Castellio, *Della Misura dell' Acque Correnti*, and a continuation, were published at Rome in 1628. His practical skill in hydraulics, displayed in carrying off the stagnant waters of the Arno and in many other public works, seems to have exceeded his theoretical science. An

<sup>1</sup> Vol. v. p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. vi. p. 608.

<sup>3</sup> "Je suis de l'opinion," says Descartes, "de ceux qui disent que *pondera sunt in equilibrio quando sunt in ratione reciproca linearum perpendicularium*," &c. — Vol. ix. p. 357. He would not name Roberval; one of those little weaknesses which appear too frequently in his letters, and in all his writings. Descartes in fact, could not

bear to think that another, even though not an enemy, had discovered any thing. In the preceding page he says, "C'est une chose ridicule que de vouloir employer la raison du levier dans la poulie, ce qui est, si j'ai bonne mémoire, une imagination de Gulde Ubalde." Yet this imagination is demonstrated in all our elementary books on mechanics.

error into which he fell, supposing the velocity of fluids to be as the height down which they had descended, led to false results. Torricelli proved that it was as the square root of the altitude. The latter of these two was still more distinguished by his discovery of the barometer. The principle of the siphon or sucking-pump, and the impossibility of raising water in it more than about thirty-three feet, were both well known; but even Galileo had recourse to the clumsy explanation, that Nature limited her supposed horror of a vacuum to this altitude. It occurred to the sagacity of Torricelli, that the weight of the atmospheric column pressing upon the fluid which supplied the pump was the cause of this rise above its level, and that the degree of rise was consequently the measure of that weight. That the air had weight, was known indeed to Galileo and Descartes; and the latter not only had some notion of determining it by means of a tube filled with mercury, but, in a passage which seems to have been much overlooked, distinctly suggests as one reason why water will not rise above eighteen *brasses* in a pump, "the weight of the water which counterbalances that of the air."<sup>1</sup> Torricelli happily thought of using mercury, a fluid thirteen times heavier, instead of water, and thus invented a portable instrument by which the variations of the mercurial column might be readily observed. These he found to fluctuate between certain well-known limits, and in circumstances which might justly be ascribed to the variations of atmospheric gravity. This discovery he made in 1643; and, in 1648, Pascal, by his celebrated experiment on the Puy de Dôme, established the theory of atmospheric pressure beyond dispute. He found a considerable difference in the height of the mercury at the bottom and the top of that mountain; and a smaller yet perceptible variation was proved on taking the barometer to the top of one of the loftiest churches in Paris.

45. The science of optics was so far from falling behind other branches of physics in this period, that, including the two great practical discoveries which illustrate it, no former or later generation has witnessed such an advance. Kepler began, in the year 1604, by one

Optics:  
Discoveries  
of Kepler.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. vii. p. 437.

[This seems an error of the press, or of the writer; for, the French *brasse* being

of six feet, water does not rise much more than five *brasses*. — 1847.]



of his first works, *Paralipomena ad Vitellionem*, a title somewhat more modest than he was apt to assume. In this supplement to the great Polish philosopher of the middle ages, he first explained the structure of the human eye, and its adaptation to the purposes of vision. Porta and Maurolycus had made important discoveries, but left the great problem untouched. Kepler had the sagacity to perceive the use of the retina as the canvas on which images were painted. In his treatise, says Montucla, we are not to expect the precision of our own age; but it is full of ideas novel, and worthy of a man of genius. He traced the causes of imperfect vision in its two principal cases, where the rays of light converge to a point before or behind the retina. Several other optical phenomena are well explained by Kepler; but he was unable to master the great enigma of the science, — the law of refraction. To this he turned his attention again in 1611, when he published a treatise on *Dioptrics*. He here first laid the foundation of that science. The angle of refraction, which Maurolycus had supposed equal to that of incidence, Descartes assumed to be one-third of it; which, though very erroneous as a general theorem, was sufficiently accurate for the sort of glasses he employed. It was his object to explain

Invention  
of the  
telescope.

the principle of the telescope; and in this he well succeeded. That admirable invention was then quite recent. Whatever endeavors have been made to carry up the art of assisting vision by means of a tube to much more ancient times, it seems to be fully proved that no one had made use of combined lenses for that purpose. The slight benefit which a hollow tube affords by obstructing the lateral ray must have been early familiar, and will account for passages which have been construed to imply what the writers never dreamed of.<sup>1</sup> The real inventor of the telescope is not certainly known. Metius of Alkmaar long enjoyed that honor; but the best claim seems to be that of Zachary Jens, a dealer in spectacles at Middleburg. The date of the invention, or at least of its publicity, is referred beyond dispute to 1609. The news of so wonderful a novelty spread rapidly through Europe; and, in the same year, Galileo, as has been mentioned, having heard of the discovery, con-

<sup>1</sup> Even Dutens, whose sole aim is to depreciate those whom modern science has most revered, cannot pretend to show

that the ancients made use of glasses to assist vision. *Origine des Découvertes*, t. 218.



structed, by his own sagacity, the instrument which he exhibited at Venice. It is, however, unreasonable to regard himself as the inventor; and in this respect his Italian panegyrists have gone too far. The original sort of telescope, and the only one employed in Europe for above thirty years, was formed of a convex object-glass with a concave eye-glass. This, however, has the disadvantage of diminishing too much the space which can be taken in at one point of view; "so that," says Montucla, "one can hardly believe that it could render astronomy such service as it did in the hands of a Galileo or a Scheiner." Kepler saw the principle upon which another kind might be framed with both glasses convex. This is now called the astronomical telescope, and was first employed a little before the middle of the century. The former, called the Dutch telescope, is chiefly used for short spying glasses.

46. The microscope has also been ascribed to Galileo; and so far with better cause, that we have no proof of his having known the previous invention. It appears, however, to have originated, like the telescope, in Holland, and perhaps at an earlier time. Cornelius Drebbel, who exhibited the microscope in London about 1620, has often passed for the inventor. It is suspected by Montucla that the first microscopes had concave eye-glasses, and that the present form with two convex glasses is not older than the invention of the astronomical telescope.

47. Antonio de Dominis, the celebrated Archbishop of Spalato, in a book published in 1611, though written several years before, *De Radiis Lucis in Vitris Per-* Antonio de  
Dominis.  
*spectivis et Iride*, explained more of the phenomena of the rainbow than was then understood. The varieties of color had baffled all inquirers, though the bow itself was well known to be the reflection of solar light from drops of rain. Antonio de Dominis, to account for these varieties, had recourse to refraction, the known means of giving color to the solar ray; and guiding himself by the experiment of placing between the eye and the sun a glass bottle of water, from the lower side of which light issued in the same order of colors as in the rainbow, he inferred, that, after two refractions and one intermediate reflection within the drop, the ray came to the eye tinged with different colors, according to the angle at which it had entered. Kepler, doubtless ignorant of De Dominis's

book, had suggested nearly the same. This, though not a complete theory of the rainbow, and though it left a great deal to occupy the attention, first of Descartes, and afterwards of Newton, was probably just, and carried the explanation as far as the principles then understood allowed it to go. The discovery itself may be considered as an anomaly in science, as it is one of a very refined and subtle nature, made by a man who has given no other indication of much scientific sagacity or acuteness. In many things his writings show great ignorance of principles of optics well known in his time, so that Boscovich, an excellent judge in such matters, has said of him, "*Homo opticarum rerum supra quod patitur ætas imperitissimus.*"<sup>1</sup> Montucla is hardly less severe on De Dominis, who, in fact, was a man of more ingenious than solid understanding.

48. Descartes announced to the world in his *Dioptrics*, 1637, that he had at length solved the mystery which had concealed the law of refraction. He showed that the sine of the angle of incidence at which the ray enters, has, in the same medium, a constant ratio to that of the angle at which it is refracted, or bent in passing through. But this ratio varies according to the medium; some having a much more refractive power than others. This was a law of beautiful simplicity as well as extensive usefulness; but such was the fatality, as we would desire to call it, which attended Descartes, that this discovery had been indisputably made twenty years before by a Dutch geometer of great reputation, Willebrod Snell. The treatise of Snell had never been published; but we have the evidence both of Vossius and Huygens, that Hortensius, a Dutch professor, had publicly taught the discovery of his countryman. Descartes had long lived in Holland; privately, it is true, and, by his own account, reading few books: so that in this, as in other instances, we may be charitable in our suspicions; yet it is unfortunate that he should perpetually stand in need of such indulgence.

49. Fermat did not inquire whether Descartes was the original discoverer of the law of refraction, but disputed its truth. Descartes, indeed, had not contented himself with experimentally ascertaining it, but, in his usual manner, endeavored to show the path of the ray by direct

*Dioptrics of  
Descartes.  
Law of re-  
fraction*

*Disputed  
by Fermat.*

<sup>1</sup> Playfair, *Dissertation on Physical Philosophy*, p. 119

reasoning. The hypothesis he brought forward seemed not very probable to Fermat, nor would it be permitted at present. His rival, however, fell into the same error; and, starting from an equally dubious supposition of his own, endeavored to establish the true law of refraction. He was surprised to find, that, after a calculation founded upon his own principle, the real truth of a constant ratio between the sines of the angles came out according to the theorem of Descartes. Though he did not the more admit the validity of the latter's hypothetical reasoning, he finally retired from the controversy with an elegant compliment to his adversary.

50. In the Dioptrics of Descartes, several other curious theorems are contained. He demonstrated that there are peculiar curves, of which lenses may be constructed, by the refraction from whose superficies all the incident rays will converge to a focal point, instead of being spread, as in ordinary lenses, over a certain extent of surface commonly called its spherical aberration. The effect of employing such curves of glass would be an increase of illumination, and a more perfect distinctness of image. These curves were called the ovals of Descartes; but the elliptic or hyperbolic speculum would answer nearly the same purpose. The latter kind has been frequently attempted; but, on account of the difficulties in working them, if there were no other objection, none but spherical lenses are in use. In Descartes' theory, he explained the equality of the angles of incidence and reflection in the case of light, correctly as to the result, though with the assumption of a false principle of his own, that no motion is lost in the collision of hard bodies such as he conceived light to be. Its perfect elasticity makes his demonstration true.

51. Descartes carried the theory of the rainbow beyond the point where Antonio de Dominis had left it. He gave the true explanation of the outer bow, by a second intermediate reflection of the solar ray within the drop; and he seems to have answered the question most naturally asked, though far from being of obvious solution, why all this refracted light should only strike the eye in two arches with certain angles and diameters, instead of pouring its prismatic lustre over all the rain-drops of the cloud. He found that no pencil of light continued, after undergoing the

processes of refraction and reflection in the drop, to be composed of parallel rays, and consequently to possess that degree of density which fits it to excite sensation in our eyes, except the two which make those angles with the axis drawn from the sun to an opposite point at which the two bows are perceived.

## CHAPTER IX.

HISTORY OF SOME OTHER PROVINCES OF LITERATURE FROM  
1600 TO 1660.

## SECT. I.—ON NATURAL HISTORY.

Zoölogy—Fabricius on Language of Brutes—Botany.

1. THE vast collections of Aldrovandus on zoölogy, though they may be considered as representing to us the <sup>Aldrovandus.</sup> knowledge of the sixteenth century, were, as has been seen before, only published in a small part before its close. The fourth and concluding part of his Ornithology appeared in 1603; the History of Insects in 1604. Aldrovandus himself died in 1605. The posthumous volumes appeared at considerable intervals: that on molluscos animals and zoöphytes, in 1606; on fishes and cetacea, in 1613; on whole-hoofed quadrupeds, in 1616; on digitate quadrupeds, both viviparous and oviparous, in 1637; on serpents, in 1640; and on cloven-hoofed quadrupeds, in 1642. There are also volumes on plants and minerals. These were all printed at Bologna, and most of them afterwards at Frankfort; but a complete collection is very rare.

2. In the Exotica of Clusius, 1605, a miscellaneous volume on natural history, chiefly, but not wholly, consisting of translations or extracts from older works, <sup>Clusius.</sup> we find several new species of simiæ, the manis, or scaly ant-eater of the old world, the three-toed sloth, and one or two armadillos. We may add also the since-extinguished race, that phoenix of ornithologists, the much-lamented dodo. This portly bird is delineated by Clusius, such as it then existed in the Mauritius.

3. In 1618, Piso on the Materia Medica of Brazil, together



with Maregraf's Natural History of the same country, was published at Leyden, with notes by De Laet. The descriptions of Maregraf are good, and enable us to identify the animals. They correct the imperfect notions of Gesner, and add several species which do not appear in his work, or perhaps in that of Aldrovandus: such as the tamandua, or Brazilian ant-eater; several of the family of caviés; the coatimondi, which Gesner had perhaps meant in a defective description; the lama, the pacos, the jaguar, and some smaller feline animals; the prehensile porcupine, and several ruminants. But some at least of these had been already described in the histories of the West Indies, by Hernandez d'Oviedo, Acosta, and Herrera.

4. Jonston, a Pole of Scots origin, collected the information of his predecessors in a Natural History of Animals, published in successive parts from 1648 to 1652. The History of Quadrupeds appeared in the latter year. "The text," says Cuvier, "is extracted, with some taste, from Gesner, Aldrovandus, Maregraf, and Mouffet; and it answered its purpose as an elementary work in natural history, till Linnæus taught a more accurate method of classifying, naming, and describing animals. Even Linnæus cites him continually."<sup>1</sup> I find in Jonston a pretty good account of the chimpanzee (Orang-otang Indorum, ab Angola delatus), taken perhaps from the *Observationes Medicæ* of Tulpus.<sup>2</sup> The delineations in Jonston being from copper-plates, are superior to the coarse wood-cuts of Gesner, but fail sometimes very greatly in exactness. In his notions of classification, being little else than a compiler, it may be supposed that he did not advance a step beyond his predecessors. The *Theatrum Insectorum* by Mouffet, an English physician of the preceding century, was published in 1634: it seems to be compiled in a considerable degree from the unpublished papers of Gesner and foreign naturalists, whom the author has rather too servilely copied. Haller, however, is said to have

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Univ.

<sup>2</sup> Grodus, Epist. ad Gallos, p. 21, gives an account of a chimpanzee, "monstrum hominis dicam an bestie?" and refers to Tulpus. The doubt of Grodus as to the possible humanity of this *quam simile turpissima bestia nobis*, is not so strange as the much graver language of Linnæus.

[In the description of *Homo Troglodytes*, as Linnæus denominates the chimpan-

zee of Angola, we find alarming intimations. "Cogitat, ratiocinatur, credit et causa factam tellurem, ac aliquando iterum fore imperantem, ad unquam fides peregrinatoribus multa."—*Systema Naturæ*, Holm. 1766. I rather believe this has been left out by Orellin. But perhaps it was only a dry way of turning travellers into ridicule.—1842.]

placed Mouffet above all entomologists before the age of Swammerdam.<sup>1</sup>

5. We may place under the head of zoölogy a short essay by Fabricius de Aquapendente, on the language of brutes; a subject very curious in itself, and which has by no means sufficiently attracted notice even in this experimental age. It cannot be said that Fabricius enters thoroughly into the problem, much less exhausts it. He divides the subject into six questions: 1. Whether brutes have a language, and of what kind; 2. How far it differs from that of man, and whether the languages of different species differ from one another; 3. What is its use; 4. In what modes animals express their affections; 5. What means we have of understanding their language; 6. What is their organ of speech. The affirmative of the first question he proves by authority of several writers, confirmed by experience, especially of hunters, shepherds, and cowherds, who know, by the difference of sounds, what animals mean to express. It may be objected that brutes utter sounds, but do not speak. But this is merely as we define speech; and he attempts to show, that brutes, by varying their utterance, do all that we do by *literal* sounds. This leads to the solution of the second question. Men agree with brutes in having speech, and in forming elementary sounds of determinate time: but ours is more complex; these elementary sounds, which he calls *articulos*, or joints of the voice, being quicker and more numerous. Man, again, forms his sounds more by means of the lips and tongue, which are softer in him than they are in brutes. Hence his speech runs into great variety and complication, which we call language, while that of animals within the same species is much more uniform.

6. The question as to the use of speech to brutes is not difficult. But he seems to confine this utility to the expression of particular emotions, and does not meddle with the more curious inquiry, whether they have a capacity of communicating specific facts to one another; and, if they have,

Fabricius  
on the lan-  
guage of  
brutes.

<sup>1</sup> Hogg. Univ.; Chalmers. I am no judge of the merits of the book; but, if the following sentences of the English translation does it no injustice, Mouffet must have taken little pains to do more than transcribe: "In Germany and England I do not hear that there are any grasshoppers at all; but if there be, they

are in both countries called Bow-krickets, or Baulm-krickets." — p. 189. This translation is subjoined to Topsell's History of Four-footed Beasts, collected out of Gesner and others, in an edition of 1658. The first edition of Topsell's very ordinary composition was in 1608.

whether this is done through the organs of the voice. The fourth question is, in how many modes animals express their feelings. These are by look, by gesture, by sound, by voice, by language. Fabricius tells us that he had seen a dog, meaning to expel another dog from the place he wished himself to occupy, begin by looking fierce, then use menacing gestures, then growl, and finally bark. Inferior animals, such as worms, have only the two former sorts of communication. Fishes, at least some kinds, have a power of emitting a sound, though not properly a voice: this may be by the fins or gills. To insects also he seems to deny voice, much more language, though they declare their feelings by sound. Even of oxen, stags, and some other quadrupeds, he would rather say that they have voice than language. But cats, dogs, and birds have a proper language. All, however, are excelled by man, who is truly called *μῆρ*, from his more clear and distinct articulations.

7. In the fifth place, however difficult it may appear to understand the language of brutes, we know that they understand what is said to them; how much more, therefore, ought we, superior in reason, to understand them! He proceeds from hence to an analysis of the passions, which he reduces to four,—joy, desire, grief, and fear. Having thus drawn our map of the passions, we must ascertain by observation what are the articulations of which any species of animals is capable, which cannot be done by description. His own experiments were made on the dog and the hen. Their articulations are sometimes complex; as, when a dog wants to come into his master's chamber, he begins by a shrill small yelp, expressive of desire, which becomes deeper, so as to denote a mingled desire and annoyance, and ends in a lamentable howl of the latter feeling alone. Fabricius gives several other rules deduced from observation of dogs, but ends by confessing that he has not fully attained his object, which was to furnish every one with a compendious method of understanding the language of animals: the inquirer must therefore proceed upon these rudiments, and make out more by observation and good canine society. He shows, finally, from the different structure of the organs of speech, that no brute can ever rival man; the chief instrument being the throat, which we use only for vowel sounds. Two important questions are hardly touched in this little treatise: first, as has been said,

whether brutes can communicate specific facts to each other; and, secondly, to what extent they can associate ideas with the language of man. These ought to occupy our excellent naturalists.

8. Columna, belonging to the Colonna family, and one of the greatest botanists of the sixteenth century, maintained the honor of that science during the present period, which his long life embraced. In the Academy of the Lincei, to which the revival of natural philosophy is greatly due, Columna took a conspicuous share. His *Ecphrasis*, a history of rare plants, was published in two parts at Rome, in 1606 and 1616. In this he laid down the true basis of the science, by establishing the distinction of genera, which Gesner, Cesalpin, and Joachim Camerarius had already conceived, but which it was left for Columna to confirm and employ. He alone, of all the contemporary botanists, seems to have appreciated the luminous ideas which Casalpini had bequeathed to posterity.<sup>1</sup> In his posthumous observations on the Natural History of Mexico by Hernandez, he still further developed the philosophy of botanical arrangements. Columna is the first who used copper instead of wood to delineate plants; an improvement which soon became general. This was in the *Persea Guayanae*, sive *Plantarum aliquot Historia*, 1594. There are errors in this work; but it is remarkable for the accuracy of the descriptions, and for the correctness and beauty of the figures.<sup>2</sup>

Botany:  
Columna.

9. Two brothers, John and Gaspar Bauhin, inferior in philosophy to Columna, made more copious additions to the nomenclature and description of plants. The elder, who was born in 1541, and had acquired some celebrity as a botanist in the last century, lived to complete, but not to publish, an *Historia Plantarum Universalis*, which did not appear till 1650. It contains the descriptions of 5,000 species, and the figures of 3,577, but small and ill-executed. His brother, though much younger, had preceded him, not only by the *Phytopynx* in 1596, but by his chief work, the *Pinax Theatri Botanici*, in 1623. "Gaspar Bauhin," says a modern botanist, "is inferior to his brother in his descriptions and in sagacity; but his delineations are better, and his synonymes more complete. They are both below Clusius in description, and below several older botanists in

John and  
Gaspar  
Bauhin.

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Univ.

<sup>2</sup> Id. Sprengel.



their figures. In their arrangement they follow Lobel, and have neglected the lights which Cæsalpin and Columna had held out. Their chief praise is to have brought together a great deal of knowledge acquired by their predecessors; but the merit of both has been exaggerated."<sup>1</sup>

10. Johnson, in 1636, published an edition of Gerard's Herbal. But the *Theatrum Botanicum* of Parkinson,

in 1640, is a work, says Pulteney, of much more originality than Gerard's; and it contains abundantly more matter. We find in it near 3,800 plants; but many descriptions recur more than once. The arrangement is in seventeen classes, partly according to the known or supposed qualities of the plant, and partly according to their external character.<sup>2</sup> "This heterogeneous classification, which seems to be founded on that of Dodoens, shows the small advances that had been made towards any truly scientific distribution: on the contrary, Gerard, Johnson, and Parkinson had rather gone back, by not sufficiently pursuing the example of Lobel."

## SECT. II.—ON ANATOMY AND MEDICINE.

Claims of Early Writers to the Discovery of the Circulation of the Blood—Harvey  
—Lacteal Vessels discovered by Asellius—Medicine.

11. THE first important discovery that was made public in this century was that of the valves of the veins; which is justly ascribed to Fabricius de Aquapendente, a professor at Padua; because, though some of these valves are described even by Berenger, and further observations were made on the subject by Sylvius, Vesalius, and other anatomists, yet Fallopius himself had in this instance thrown back the science by denying their existence; and no one before Fabricius had generalized the discovery. This he did in his public lectures as early as 1524; but

<sup>1</sup> Dioge. Univ. Pulteney speaks more highly of John Bauhin: "That which Gewner performed for zoology, John Bauhin effected in botany. It is, in reality, a repository of all that was valuable in the ancients, in his immediate predecessors, and in the discoveries of his own

time, relating to the history of vegetables, and is executed with that accuracy and critical judgment which can only be exhibited by superior talents."—*Hist. of Botany in England*, l. 120.

<sup>2</sup> P. 140.



his tract *De Venarum Ostiolis* appeared in 1603. This discovery, as well as that of Harvey, has been attributed to Father Paul Sarpi, whose immense reputation in the north of Italy accredited every tale favorable to his glory. But there seems to be no sort of ground for either supposition.

12. The discovery of a general circulation in the blood has done such honor to Harvey's name, and has been claimed for so many others, that it deserves more consideration than we can usually give to anatomical science. According to Galen, and the general theory of anatomists formed by his writings, the arterial blood flows from the heart to the extremities, and returns again by the same channels; the venous blood being propelled, in like manner, to and from the liver. The discovery attributed to Harvey was, that the arteries communicate with the veins, and that all the blood returns to the heart by the latter vessels. Besides this general or systemic circulation, there is one called the pulmonary, in which the blood is carried by certain arteries through the lungs, and returned again by corresponding veins preparatory to its being sent into the general sanguineous system; so that its course is through a double series of ramified vessels, each beginning and terminating at the heart, but not at the same side of the heart: the left side, which from a cavity called its ventricle throws out the arterial blood by the aorta, and by another called its auricle receives that which has passed through the lungs by the pulmonary vein, being separated by a solid septum from the right side, which, by means of similar cavities, receives the blood of all the veins, excepting those of the lungs, and throws it out into the pulmonary artery. It is thus evident that the word "pulmonary circulation" is not strictly proper: there being only one for the whole body.

Theory of  
the blood's  
circulation

13. The famous work of Servetus, *Christianismi Restitutio*, has excited the attention of the literary part of the world, not only by the unhappy fate it brought upon the author, and its extreme scarcity, but by a remarkable passage wherein he has been supposed to describe the circulation of the blood. That Servetus had a just idea of the pulmonary circulation and the aeration of the blood in the lungs, is manifest by this passage, and is denied by no one; but it has been the opinion of anatomists, that he did

Sometimes  
ascribed to  
Servetus,

not apprehend the return of the mass of the blood through the veins to the right auricle of the heart.<sup>1</sup>

14. Columbus is acknowledged to have been acquainted with the pulmonary circulation. He says of his own discovery, that no one had observed or consigned it to writing before. Arantius, according to Portal, has de-

<sup>1</sup> In the first edition of this work, I remarked, vol. i. p. 459, that Levasseur had come much nearer to the theory of a general circulation than Servetus. But the passage in Levasseur, which I knew only from the quotation in Portal, *Hist. de l'Anatomie*, i. 373, does not, on consulting the book itself, bear out the inference which Portal seems to deduce; and he has, not quite rightly, omitted all expressions which he thought erroneous. Thus Levasseur precedes the first sentence of Portal's quotation by the following: "*Intus (in corde) sunt sinus seu ventriculi duo tantum, septo quodam medio discreti, per quos foramina sanguis et spiritus communicatur. In utroque duo vasa habentur.*" For this he quotes Galen; and the perforation of the septum of the heart is known to be one of Galen's errors. Upon the whole, there seems no ground for believing that Levasseur was acquainted with the general circulation; and, though his language may at first lead us to believe that he speaks of that through the lungs, even this is not distinctly made out. Sprengel, in his *History of Medicine*, does not mention the name of Levasseur (or Vasseus, as he was called in Latin) among those who anticipated in any degree the discovery of circulation. The book quoted by Portal as Vasseus in *Anatomen Corporis Humani Tabule Quintor*, several times printed between 1540 and 1560.

André (*Origine e Progresso d'ogni Letteratura*, vol. xiv. p. 37) has put in a claim for a Spanish farrier, by name Reyna, who, in a book printed in 1552, but of which there seems to have been an earlier edition (*Libro de Maniscalcheria hecho y ordenado por Francisco de la Reyna*), asserts, in few and plain words, as André quotes them in Italian, that the blood goes in a circle through all the limbs. I do not know that the book has been seen by any one else; and it would be desirable to examine the context, since other writers have seemed to know the truth without really apprehending it.

That Servetus was only acquainted with the pulmonary circulation has been the general opinion. Portal, though in one place he speaks with less precision, repeatedly limits the discovery to this; and Sprengel does not entertain the least suspicion that it went farther. André (xiv.

38), not certainly a medical authority, but conversant with such, and very partial to Spanish claimants, asserts the same. If a more general language may be found in some writers, it may be ascribed to their want of distinguishing the two circulations. A medical friend, who, at my request, perused and considered the passage in Servetus, as it is quoted in Allwörden's life, says in a letter, "All that this passage implies, which has any reference to the greater circulation, may be comprised in the following points: — 1. That the heart transmits a vivifying principle along the arteries and the blood which they contain to the anastomosing veins; 2. That this living principle vivifies the liver and the venous system generally; 3. That the liver produces the blood itself, and transmits it through the vena cava to the heart, in order to obtain the vital principle, by performing the lesser circulation, which Servetus seems perfectly to comprehend."

Now, according to this view of the passage, all the movement of the blood implied is that which takes place from the liver, through the vena cava to the heart, and that of the lesser circulation. It would appear to me that Servetus is on the brink of the discovery of the circulation; but that his notions respecting the transmission of his *vitæ spiritus* diverted his attention from that great movement of the blood itself which Harvey discovered. . . . It is clear that the quantity of blood sent to the heart for the elaboration of the vitalis spiritus is, according to Servetus, only that furnished by the liver to the vena cava inferior. But the blood thus introduced is represented by him as performing the circulation through the lungs very regularly."

It appears singular, that, while Servetus distinctly knew that the septum of the heart, *paries illi medius*, as he calls it is closed, which Berenger had discovered, and Vesalius confirmed (though the bulk of anatomists long afterwards adhered to Galen's notion of perforation), and consequently that some other means must exist for restoring the blood from the left division of the heart to the right, he should not have seen the necessity of a system of vessels to carry forward this communication.

scribed the pulmonary circulation still better than Columbus; while Sprengel denies that he has described it at all. It is perfectly certain, and is admitted on all sides, that Columbus did not know the systemic circulation: in what manner he disposed of the blood does not very clearly appear; but, as he conceived a passage to exist between the ventricles of the heart, it is probable, though his words do not lead to this inference, that he supposed the aerated blood to be transmitted back in this course.<sup>1</sup>

15. Cæsalpin, whose versatile genius entered upon every field of research, has, in more than one of his treatises relating to very different topics, and especially in that upon plants, some remarkable passages on the same subject, which approach more nearly than any we have seen to a just notion of the general circulation, and have led several writers to insist on his claim as a prior discoverer to Harvey. Portal admits that this might be regarded as a fair pretension, if he were to judge from such passages; but there are others which contradict this supposition, and show Cæsalpin to have had a confused and imperfect idea of the office of the veins. Sprengel, though at first he seems to incline more towards the pretensions of Cæsalpin, comes ultimately almost to the same conclusion; and, giving the reader the words of most importance, leaves him to form his own judgment. The Italians are more confident: Tiraboschi and Corniani, neither of whom are medical authorities, put in an unhesitating claim for Cæsalpin as the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, not without unfair reflections on Harvey.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The leading passage in Columbus (*De Re Anatomica*, lib. vii. p. 177, edit. 1559), which I have not found quoted by Portal or Sprengel, is as follows: "Inter hos sententios septum adeat, per quod fere omnes existant sanguini a dextro ventriculo ad sinistram aditum patet: id ut fieret facillius, in transitu ob vitallium spirituum generationem densum reddit; sed longa erant via; nam sanguis per arteriarum venam ad pulmonem fertur; ibique attenuatur: deinde cum aere una per arteriam veniem ad sinistram cordis ventriculum deferatur: quod nemo hactenus aut animadvertit aut scriptum reliquit; fiet maxime et ab omnibus animadvertendum." He afterwards makes a remark, in which Servetus had preceded him, that the use of the pulmonary artery (vena arteriosa) is greater than would be required for the nutrition of the lungs

alone. Whether he knew of the passages in Servetus or no, notwithstanding his claim of originality, is not perhaps manifest; the coincidence as to the function of the lungs in aerating the blood is remarkable; but, if Columbus had any direct knowledge of the *Christianismi Restitutio*, he did not choose to follow it in the remarkable discovery that there is no perforation in the septum between the ventricles.

<sup>2</sup> Tiraboschi, x. 49; Corniani, vi. 2. He quotes, on the authority of another Italian writer, "Il giudizio di due Illustri Inglesi, i fratelli Hunter, i quali, esaminato bene il processo di questa causa, si maravigliano della sentenza data in favore del loro concittadino." I must doubt, till more evidence is produced, whether this be true.

The passage in Cæsalpin's *Quæstiones*

16. It is thus manifest, that several anatomists of the sixteenth century were on the verge of completely detecting the law by which the motion of the blood is governed; and the language of one is so strong, that we must have recourse, in order to exclude his claim, to the irresistible fact that he did not confirm by proof his own theory, nor proclaim it in such a manner as to attract the attention of the world. Certainly, when the doctrine of a general circulation was advanced by Harvey, he both announced it as a paradox, and was not deceived in expecting that it would be so accounted. Those again who strove to depreciate his originality sought intimations in the writings of the ancients, and even spread a rumor that he had stolen the papers of Father Paul; but it does not appear that they talked, like some moderns, of plagiarism from Levasseur or Cæsalpin.

17. William Harvey first taught the circulation of the blood in London in 1619; but his *Exercitatio de Motu Cordis* was not published till 1628. He was induced, as is said, to conceive the probability of this great truth by reflecting on the final cause of those valves, which his master, Fabricius de Aquapendente, had demonstrated in the veins; valves whose structure was such as to prevent the reflux of the blood towards the extremities. Fabricius himself seems to have been ignorant of this structure, and certainly of the circulation; for he presumes that they serve to prevent the blood from flowing like a river towards the feet and hands, and from collecting in one part. Harvey followed

Peripatetico is certainly the most resembling a statement of the entire truth that can be found in any writer before Harvey. I transcribe it from Dutens's *Origines des Découvertes*, vol. ii. p. 23: "Ictericæ pulmō per venam arteriā similē ex dextro cordis ventriculo fervidum hauriens sanguinem, eumque per anastomosis arteriæ venali rediens, quæ in sinistram cordis ventriculū tendit, transmissio interiori aere frigido per asperas arteriæ canales, qui iuxta arteriarū venarū protenduntur, non tamen oculis communicantur, ut putavit Galenus, solo tactu temperat. Huius sanguinis circulationi ex dextro cordis ventriculo per pulmōnes in sinistram ejusdem ventriculū optimè respondent ea quæ ex dissectione apparent. Nam duo sunt vasa in dextrum ventriculū desinentia, duo etiam in sinistram; duorum autem unum intronititū tantum, alterum

eductū, membranæ eo ingenio constitutis. Vasa igitur intronititens vena est magnā quidem in dextro, quæ cava appellatur; parva autem in sinistro ex pulmōne introducens, cujus unica est tunica, et extensor venarū. Vasa autem eductens arteria est magnā quidem in sinistro, quæ aorta appellatur; parva autem in dextro ad pulmōnes derivans, cujus similiter duas sunt tunicas, ut in cæteris arteriis."

In the treatise *De Plantis* we have a similar but shorter passage: "Nam in animalibus videmus alimentum per venas duci ad cor tanquam ad officinam caloris insiti, et adepta inibi ultima perfectione, per arterias in universum corpus distribui agente spiritū, qui ex eodem alimentis in corde gignitur." I have taken this from the article on Cæsalpin in the *Biographie Universelle*.



his own happy conjecture by a long inductive process of experiments on the effects of ligatures, and on the observed motion of the blood in living animals.

18. Portal has imputed to Harvey an unfair silence as to Servetus, Columbus, Levasseur, and Cæsalpin, who had all preceded him in the same track. Tiraboschi copies Portal; and Corniani speaks of the appropriation of Cæsalpin's discovery by Harvey. It may be replied, that no one can reasonably presume Harvey to have been acquainted with the passage in Servetus. But the imputation of suppressing the merits of Columbus is grossly unjust, and founded upon ignorance or forgetfulness of Harvey's celebrated *Exercitation*. In the proœmium to this treatise, he observes, that almost all anatomists have hitherto supposed, with Galen, that the mechanism of the pulse is the same as that of respiration. But he not less than three times makes an exception for Columbus, to whom he most expressly refers the theory of a pulmonary circulation.<sup>1</sup> Of Cæsalpin he certainly says nothing; but there seems to be no presumption that he was acquainted with that author's writings. Were it even true that he had been guided in his researches by the obscure passages we have quoted, could this set aside the merit of that patient induction by which he established his own theory? Cæsalpin asserts at best, what we may say he divined, but did not know to be true: Harvey asserts what he had demonstrated. The one is an empiric in a philosophical sense; the other, a legitimate minister of truth. It has been justly said, that he alone discovers who proves; nor is there a more odious office or a more sophistical course of reasoning than to impair the credit of great men, as Dutens wasted his crudition in doing, by hunting out equivocal and insulated passages from older writers, in order to depreciate the originality of the real teachers of mankind.<sup>2</sup> It may indeed be thought wonderful,

Unjustly  
doubted to  
be original.

<sup>1</sup> "Pene omnes huc usque anatomici medicæ et philosophi supponunt cum Galeno eundem nam esse pulsum, quam respirationis." But though he certainly claims the doctrine of a general circulation as wholly his own, and counts it a paradox which will startle every one, he as expressly refers (pp. 88 and 41 of the *Exercitation*) that of a pulmonary transmission of the blood to Columbus, *peritricorno doctissimique anatomico*; and observes, in his proœmium, as an objection to the received theory, "quomodo probabile est (ut notavi Rualdus Colum-

bus) tanto sanguine opus esse ad nutritionem pulmonum, cum hoc vas, vena videlicet arteriosa (id est, arteria pulmonalis) exsuperet magnitudine utrumque rancum distributionis venæ cavae descendens cruralem."—p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> This is the general character of a really learned and interesting work by Dutens, *Origine des Découvertes attribuées aux Modernes*. Justice is due to those who have first struck out, even without following up, original ideas in any science; but not at the expense of those who, generally without knowledge



that Servetus, Columbus, or Cæsalpin should not have more distinctly apprehended the consequences of what they maintained, since it seems difficult to conceive the lesser circulation without the greater; but the defectiveness of their views is not to be alleged as a counterbalance to the more steady sagacity of Harvey. The solution of their falling so short is, that they were right, not indeed quite by guess, but upon insufficient proof; and that the consciousness of this, embarrassing their minds, prevented them from deducing inferences which now appear irresistible. In every department of philosophy, the researches of the first inquirers have often been arrested by similar causes.<sup>1</sup>

19. Harvey is the author of a treatise on generation, wherein he maintains that all animals, including men, are derived from an egg. In this book we first find an argument maintained against spontaneous generation, which, in the case of the lower animals, had been generally received. Sprengel thinks this treatise prolix, and not equal to the author's reputation.<sup>2</sup> It was first published in 1651.

20. Next in importance to the discovery of Harvey is that of Asellius as to the lacteal vessels. Eustachius had observed the thoracic duct in a horse. But Asellius, more by chance, as he owns, than by sagacity, perceived the lacteals in a fat dog whom he opened soon after it had eaten. This was in 1622; and his treatise, *De Lacteis*

of what had been said before, have deduced the same principles from reasoning or from observation, and carried them out to important consequences. Pascal quotes Montaigne for the shrewd remark, that we should try a man who says a wise thing, for we may often find that he does not understand it. Those who entertain a morbid jealousy of modern philosophy are glad to avail themselves of such hunters into obscure antiquity as Dutens: and they are seconded by all the envious, the uncandid, and by many of the unreflecting among mankind. With respect to the immediate question, the passages which Dutens has quoted from Hippocrates and Plato have certainly an appearance of expressing a real circulation of the blood by the words *πεποδοσ* and *πεπεπονημενα αμαρτος*; but others, and especially one from Nemesius, on which some reliance has been placed, mean nothing more than the flux and reflux of the blood, which the contraction and dilatation of the heart

was supposed to produce. See Dutens, vol. II. pp. 8-18. Mr. Coleridge has been deceived in the same manner by some lines of Jordano Bruno, which he takes to describe the circulation of the blood; whereas they merely express its movement to and fro, *meat si rement*, which might be by the same system of vessels.

<sup>1</sup> The biographer of Harvey in the *Biographie Universelle* strongly vindicates his claim. "Tous les hommes instruits conviennent aujourd'hui que Harvey est le véritable auteur de cette belle découverte. . . Cæsalpin présentait la circulation artérielle, en supposant que le sang retourne des extrémités au cœur; mais ces assertions ne furent point prouvées; elles ne se trouvèrent étayées par aucune expérience, par aucun fait; et l'on peut dire de Cæsalpin qu'il donna presque la grande circulation dont les lois lui furent totalement inconnues; la découverte en était réservée à Guillaume Harvey."

<sup>2</sup> Hist. de la Médecine, iv. 256; Portal, II. 477.

Venis, was published in 1627.<sup>1</sup> Harvey did not assent to this discovery, and endeavored to dispute the use of the vessels; nor is it to his honor, that, even to the end of his life, he disregarded the subsequent confirmation that Pecquet and Bartholin had furnished.<sup>2</sup> The former detected the common origin of the lacteal and lymphatic vessels in 1647, though his work on the subject was not published till 1651. But Olaus Rudbeck was the first who clearly distinguished these two kinds of vessels.

21. Scheiner proved that the retina is the organ of sight, and that the humors serve only to refract the rays which paint the object on the optic nerve. This was in a treatise entitled *Oculus, hoc est, Fundamentum Opticum*, 1619.<sup>3</sup> The writings of several anatomists of this period, such as Riolan, Vesling, Bartholin, contain partial accessions to the science; but it seems to have been less enriched by great discoveries, after those already named, than in the preceding century.

Optical  
discoveries  
of Scheiner.

22. The mystical medicine of Paracelsus continued to have many advocates in Germany. A new class of enthusiasts sprung from the same school, and, calling themselves Rosicrucians, pretended to cure diseases by faith and imagination. A true Rosicrucian, they held, had only to look on a patient to cure him. The analogy of magnetism, revived in the last and present age, was commonly employed.<sup>4</sup> Of this school the most eminent was Van Helmont, who combined the Paracelsian superstitions with some original ideas of his own. His general idea of medicine was, that its business was to regulate the archæus, an immaterial principle of life and health; to which, like Paracelsus, he attributed a mysterious being and efficacy. The seat of the archæus is in the stomach; and it is to be effected either by a scheme of diet or through the imagination. Sprengel praises Van Helmont for overthrowing many current errors, and for announcing principles since pursued.<sup>5</sup> The French physicians

Medicine:  
Van Hel-  
mont.

<sup>1</sup> Portal, ii. 461; Sprengel, iv. 201. Peiresc, soon after this, got the body of a man fresh hanged after a good supper, and had the pleasure of confirming the discovery of Asellus by his own eyes. Guersault. *Vita Peirescæ*, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> Sprengel, iv. 203.

<sup>3</sup> Id. 270.

<sup>4</sup> All in nature, says Croll of Hesse, one of the principal theosophists in medicine, is living; all that lives has its vital

force, or astrum, which cannot act without a body, but passes from one to another. All things in the macrocosm are found also in the microcosm. The inward or astral man is Gabbai, from which the science is named. This Gabbai, or imagination, is as a magnet to external objects, which it thus attracts. Medicine acts by a magnetic force. Sprengel, iii. 302.

<sup>5</sup> Vol. v p. 22.

adhered to the Hippocratic school, in opposition to what Sprengel calls the Chemiatic, which more or less may be reckoned that of Paracelsus. The Italians were still renowned in medicine. Sanctorius, *De Medicina Statica*, 1614, seems the only work to which we need allude. It is loaded with eulogy by Portal, Tiraboschi, and other writers.<sup>1</sup>

### SECTION III.

On Oriental Literature—Hebrew Learning—Arabic and other Eastern Languages.

23. DURING no period of equal length since the revival of letters has the knowledge of the Hebrew language been apparently so much diffused among the literary world as in that before us. The frequent sprinkling of its characters in works of the most miscellaneous erudition will strike the eye of every one who habitually consults them. Nor was this learning by any means so much confined to the clergy as it has been in later times, though their order naturally furnished the greater portion of those who labored in that field. Some of the chief Hebraists of this age were laymen. The study of this language prevailed most in the Protestant countries of Europe; and it was cultivated with much zeal in England. The period between the last years of Elizabeth and the Restoration may, perhaps, be reckoned that in which a knowledge of Hebrew has been most usual among our divines.

24. Upon this subject I can only assert what I collect to be the verdict of judicious critics.<sup>2</sup> It seems that the Hebrew language was not yet sufficiently studied in the method most likely to give an insight into its principles, by comparing it with all the cognate tongues, latterly called Semitic, spoken in the neighboring parts of Asia, and manifestly springing from a common source.

<sup>1</sup> Portal, li. 391; Tiraboschi, xl. 270; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>2</sup> The fifth volume of Eichhorn's *Geschichte der Cultur* is devoted to the progress of Oriental literature in Europe, not very full in characterizing the various productions it mentions, but analytically arranged, and highly useful for reference.

Jenisch, in his preface to Meninski's *Thesaurus* (Vienna, 1780), has traced a sketch of the same subject. We may have trusted in some respects to Simon, *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*. The biographical dictionaries, English and French, have of course been resorted to.

Postel, indeed, had made some attempts at this in the last century, but his learning was very slight; and Schindler published in 1612 a *Lexicon Pentaglotum*, in which the Arabic, as well as Syriac and Chaldaic, were placed in apposition with the Hebrew text. Louis de Dieu, whose *Remarks* on all the Books of the Old Testament were published at Leyden in 1648, has frequently recourse to some of the kindred languages, in order to explain the Hebrew.<sup>1</sup> But the first instructors in the latter had been Jewish rabbis; and the Hebraists of the sixteenth age had imbibed a prejudice, not unnatural though unfounded, that their teachers were best conversant with the language of their forefathers.<sup>2</sup> They had derived from the same source an extravagant notion of the beauty, antiquity, and capacity of the Hebrew; and, combining this with still more chimerical dreams of a mystical philosophy, lost sight of all real principles of criticism.

25. The most eminent Hebrew scholars of this age were the two Buxtorfs of Basle, father and son, both devoted to the rabbinical school. The elder, who had become distinguished before the end of the preceding century, published a grammar in 1609, which long continued to be reckoned the best, and a lexicon of Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Syriac, in 1623, which was not superseded for more than a hundred years. Many other works relating to these three dialects, as well as to that of the later Jews, do honor to the erudition of the elder Buxtorf; but he is considered as representing a class of Hebraists, which, in the more comprehensive Orientalism of the eighteenth century, has lost much of its credit. The son trod closely in his father's footsteps, whom he succeeded as professor of Hebrew at Basle. They held this chair between them more than seventy years. The younger Buxtorf was engaged in controversies which had not begun in his father's life-time. Morin, one of those learned Protestants who had gone over to the Church of Rome, systematically labored to establish the authority of those versions which the church had approved, by weakening that of the text which passed for original.<sup>3</sup> Hence he endeavored to show, — though this could not logically do much for his object, — that

<sup>1</sup> Simon, *Hist. Critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 494.

<sup>2</sup> This was not the case with Luther, who rejected the authority of the rabbis, and thought none but Christians could understand the Old Testament. Simon,

p. 375. But Munster, Fagius, and several others, who are found in the *Critice Sacre*, gave way to the prejudices in favor of rabbinical opinions, and their commentaries are consequently too Judaical. — p. 406

<sup>3</sup> Simon, p. 522.



the Samaritan Pentateuch, then lately brought to Europe, which is not in a different language, but merely the Hebrew written in Samaritan characters, is deserving of preference above what is called the Masoretic text, from which the Protestant versions are taken. The variations between these are sufficiently numerous to affect a favorite hypothesis borrowed from the rabbis, but strenuously maintained by the generality of Protestants, that the Hebrew text of the Masoretic revision is perfectly incorrupt.<sup>1</sup> Morin's opinion was opposed by Buxtorf and Hottinger, and by other writers even of the Romish Church. It has, however, been countenanced by Simon and Kennicott. The integrity at least of the Hebrew copies was gradually given up; and it has since been shown that they differ greatly among themselves. The Samaritan Pentateuch was first published in 1645, several years after this controversy began, by Sionita, editor of the Parisian Polyglott. This edition, sometimes called by the name of Le Jay, contains most that is in the Polyglott of Antwerp, with the addition of the Syriac and Arabic versions of the Old Testament.

26. An epoch was made in Hebrew criticism by a work of Louis Cappel, professor of that language at Saumur, the *Arcanum Punctuationis Revelatum*, in 1624. He maintained in this an opinion promulgated by Elias Levita, and held by the first reformers and many other Protestants of the highest authority, though contrary to that vulgar orthodoxy which is always omnivorous, that the vowel-points of Hebrew were invented by certain Jews of Tiberias in the sixth century. They had been generally deemed coeval with the language, or at least brought in by Esdras through divine inspiration. It is not surprising that such an hypothesis clashed with the prejudices of mankind; and Cappel was obliged to publish his work in Holland. The Protestants looked upon it as too great a concession in favor of the Vulgate, which, having been translated before the Masoretic punctuation, on Cappel's hypothesis, had been applied to the text, might now claim to stand on higher ground, and was not to be judged by these innovations. After twenty years, the younger Buxtorf endeavored to vindicate the antiquity of vowel-points; but it is now confessed that the victory remained with Cappel, who has been styled the father of Hebrew criti-

Vowel-  
points  
rejected  
by Cappel.

<sup>1</sup> Simon, p. 522; Ezechiah, v. 434.



cism. His principal work is the *Critica Sacra*, published at Paris in 1650, wherein he still further discredits the existing manuscripts of the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as the Masoretic punctuation.<sup>1</sup>

27. The rabbinical literature, meaning as well the Talmud and other ancient books, as those of the later ages <sup>Hebrew</sup> since the revival of intellectual pursuits among the <sup>scholars.</sup> Jews of Spain and the East, gave occupation to a considerable class of scholars. Several of these belong to England, such as Ainsworth, Godwin, Lightfoot, Selden, and Pococke. The antiquities of Judaism were illustrated by Cuneus in *Jus Regium Hebræorum*, 1623, and especially by Selden, both in the *Uxor Hebraica* and in the treatise *De Jure Naturali et Gentium juxta Hebræos*. But no one has left a more durable reputation in this literature than Bochart, a Protestant minister at Caen. His *Geographia Sacra*, published in 1646, is not the most famous of his works, but the only one which falls within this period. It displays great learning and sagacity; but it was impossible, as has been justly observed, that he could thoroughly elucidate this subject at a time when we knew comparatively little of modern Asia, and had few good books of travels. A similar observation might of course be applied to his *Hieroicoicon*, on the animals mentioned in Scripture. Both these works, however, were much extolled in the seventeenth century.

28. In the Chaldee and Syriac languages, which approach so closely to Hebrew that the best scholars in the <sup>Chaldee</sup> latter are rarely unacquainted with them, besides <sup>and Syriac</sup> the Buxtorfs, we find Ferrari, author of a Syriac lexicon, published at Rome in 1622; Louis de Dieu of Leyden, whose Syriac grammar appeared in 1626; and the Syriac translation of the Old Testament in the *Parishum Polyglott*, edited by Gabriel Sionita, in 1642. A Syriac college for the Maronites of Libanus had been founded at Rome by Gregory XIII.; but it did not as yet produce any thing of importance.

<sup>1</sup> Simon, Eichhorn, &c. A detailed account of this controversy about vowel-points between Cappel and the Buxtorfs will be found in the 12th volume of the *Bibliothèque Universelle*; and a shorter *precis* in Eichhorn's *Einführung in das alte Testament*, vol. i. p. 242.

[It is not universally agreed, that Cappel was altogether in the right about Hebrew

vowels. Schultens was the first, according to Dathe, who proved that neither party could be reckoned wholly victorious. It seems, however, that the points now in use are acknowledged to be comparatively modern. Dathe, *Prefatio* ad Waltoni *Prolegomena*, Lips. 1777, p. 27—1847.]

29. But a language incomparably more rich in literary treasures, and long neglected by Europe, began now to take a conspicuous place in the annals of learning. Scaliger deserves the glory of being the first real Arabic scholar; for Postel, Christman, and a very few more of the sixteenth century, are hardly worth notice. His friend Casaubon, who extols his acquirements, as usual, very highly, devoted himself some time to this study. But Scaliger made use of the language chiefly to enlarge his own vast sphere of erudition. He published nothing on the subject; but his collections became the base of Rapheling's Arabic lexicon, and it is said that they were far more extensive than what appears in that work. He who properly added this language to the domain of learning was Erpenius, a native of Gorcum, who, at an early age, had gained so unrivalled an acquaintance with the Oriental languages as to be appointed professor of them at Leyden, in 1613. He edited, the same year, the above-mentioned lexicon of Rapheling, and published a grammar, which might not only be accounted the first composed in Europe that deserved the name, but became the guide to most later scholars. Erpenius gave several other works to the world, chiefly connected with the Arabic version of the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> Golius, his successor in the Oriental chair at Leyden, besides publishing a lexicon of the language, which is said to be still the most copious, elaborate, and complete that has appeared;<sup>2</sup> and several editions of Arabic writings, poetical and historical, contributed still more extensively to bring the range of Arabian literature before the world. He enriched with a hundred and fifty manuscripts, collected in his travels, the library of Leyden, to which Scaliger had bequeathed forty.<sup>3</sup> The manuscripts belonging to Erpenius found their way to Cambridge; while, partly by the munificence of Laud, partly by later accessions, the Bodleian Library at Oxford became extremely rich in this line. The much larger collection in the Escorial seems to have been chiefly formed under Philip III. England was now as conspicuous in Arabian as in Hebrew learning. Selden, Greaves, and Pococke, especially the last, who was probably equal to any Oriental scholar whom Europe had hitherto produced, by translations of the historical and philosophical

<sup>1</sup> *Reper. Vetus.*

<sup>2</sup> *Verborum, Frædictæ in Meneski Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium, p. 122.*

<sup>3</sup> *Reper. Vetus.*

writings of the Saracenic period, gave a larger compass to general erudition.<sup>1</sup>

30. The remaining languages of the East are of less importance. The Turkish had attracted some degree of attention in the sixteenth century; but the first grammar was published by Megiser, in 1612, a very slight performance; and a better at Paris, by Du Ryer, in 1630.<sup>2</sup> The Persian grammar was given at Rome by Raimondi, in 1614; by Dieu, at Leyden, in 1639; by Greaves, at London, in 1641 and 1649.<sup>3</sup> An Armenian dictionary, by Rivoli, 1621, seems the only accession to our knowledge of that ancient language during this period.<sup>4</sup> Athanasius Kircher, a man of immense erudition, restored the Coptic, of which Europe had been wholly ignorant. Those farther eastward had not yet begun to enter into the studies of Europe. Nothing was known of the Indian; but some Chinese manuscripts had been brought to Rome and Madrid as early as 1580; and, not long afterwards, two Jesuits, Roger and Ricci, both missionaries in China, were the first who acquired a sufficient knowledge of the language to translate from it.<sup>5</sup> But scarcely any further advance took place before the middle of the century.

Other  
Eastern  
languages.

#### SECTION IV.

##### On Geography and History.

31. PURCHAS, an English clergyman, imbued by nature, like Hakluyt, with a strong bias towards geographical studies, after having formed an extensive library in that department, and consulted, as he professes, above 1,200 authors, published the first volume of his *Pilgrim*, a collection of voyages in all parts of the world, in 1613: four more followed in 1625. The accuracy of this useful compiler has been denied by those who have had better means of knowledge, and probably is inferior to that of Hakluyt; but his labor was far more comprehensive. The *Pilgrim* was, at all

Purchas's  
*Pilgrim*.

<sup>1</sup> Jenisch; Eichhorn; Biogr. Universelle; Biogr. Britannica.

<sup>2</sup> Eichhorn, v. 387.

<sup>3</sup> Id., 220

<sup>4</sup> Id., 261.

<sup>5</sup> Id., 64.

events, a great source of knowledge to the contemporaries of Purchas.<sup>1</sup>

32. Olearius was ambassador from the Duke of Holstein to Muscovy and Persia from 1633 to 1639. His travels, in German, were published in 1647, and have been several times reprinted and translated. He has well described the barbarism of Russia and the despotism of Persia; he is diffuse and episodic, but not wearisome; he observes well and relates faithfully; all who have known the countries he has visited are said to speak well of him.<sup>2</sup> Pietro della Valle is a far more amusing writer. He has thrown his travels over Syria and Persia into the form of letters written from time to time, and which he professes to have recovered from his correspondents. This perhaps is not a very probable story, both on account of the length of the letters, and the want of that reference to the present time and to small passing events, which such as are authentic commonly exhibit. His observations, however, on all the countries he visited, especially Persia, are apparently consistent with the knowledge we have obtained from later travellers. Gibbon says that none have better observed Persia; but his vanity and prolixity are insufferable. Yet I think that Della Valle can hardly be reckoned tedious; and if he is a little egotistical, the usual and almost laudable characteristic of travellers, this gives a liveliness and racy air to his narrative. What his wife, the Lady Maani, an Assyrian Christian, whom he met with at Bagdad, and who accompanied him through his long wanderings, may really have been, we can only judge from his eulogies on her beauty, her fidelity, and her courage; but she throws an air of romance over his adventures, not displeasing to the reader. The travels of Pietro della Valle took place from 1614 to 1626; but the book was first published at Rome in 1650 and has been translated into different languages.

33. The *Lexicon Geographicum* of Ferrari, in 1627, was the chief general work on geography: it is alphabetical, and contains 9,600 articles. The errors have been corrected in later editions, so that the first would probably be required in order to estimate the knowledge of its author's age.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Univ.; Pinkerton's Collection of Voyages and Travels. The latter does not value Purchas highly for correctness.

<sup>2</sup> Biogr. Universelle.

<sup>3</sup> Salfi, xl. 418; Biogr. Universelle.



34. The best measure, perhaps, of geographical science, are the maps published from time to time, as perfectly <sup>Maps of</sup> for the most part, we may presume, as their editors <sup>Blaew.</sup> could render them. If we compare the map of the world in the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum sive Novus Atlas* of Blaew in 1648 with that of the edition of Ortelius published at Antwerp in 1612, the improvements will not appear exceedingly great. America is still separated from Asia by the Straits of Anian, about lat. 60; but the coast to the south is made to trend away more than before: on the N. E. coast we find Davis's Sea, and Estotiland has vanished to give way to Greenland. Canada continues to be most inaccurately laid down, though there is a general idea of lakes and rivers better than in Ortelius. Scandinavia is far better, and tolerably correct. In the South, Terra del Fuego terminates in Cape Horn, instead of being united to Terra Australis: but, in the East, Corea appears as an oblong island; the Sea of Aral is not set down, and the Wall of China is placed north of the fiftieth parallel. India is very much too small, and the shape of the Caspian Sea is wholly inaccurate. But a comparison with the map of Hakluyt, mentioned in our second volume, will not exhibit so much superiority of Blaew's Atlas. The latter, however, shows more knowledge of the interior country, especially in North America, and a better outline in many parts of the Asiatic coast. The maps of particular regions in Europe are on a large scale, and numerous. Speed's maps, 1646, appear by no means inferior to those of Blaew; but several of the errors are the same. Considering the progress of commerce, especially that of the Dutch, during this half-century, we may rather be surprised at the defective state of these maps.

35. Two histories of general reputation were published in the Italian language during these fifty years: one, Davila and of the civil wars in France by Davila, in 1630; and Bentivoglio. another, of those in Flanders by Cardinal Bentivoglio. Both of these had the advantage of interesting subjects: they had been sufficiently conversant with the actors to know much and to judge well, without that particular responsibility which tempts an historian to prevarication. They were both men of cool and sedate tempers, accustomed to think policy a game in which the strong play with the weak; obtuse, especially the former, in moral sentiment; but, on this account, not



inclined to calumniate an opposite party, or to withhold admiration from intellectual power. Both these histories may be read over and over with pleasure: if Davila is too refined, if he is not altogether faithful, if his style wants the elegance of some older Italians, he more than redeems all this by the importance of his subject, the variety and picturesqueness of his narration, and the acuteness of his reflections. Bentivoglio is reckoned, as a writer, among the very first of his age.

36. The history of the War of Granada, that is, the rebellion of the Moriscos in 1565, by the famous Diego de Mendoza, was published posthumously in 1610.

It is placed by the Spaniards themselves on a level with the most renowned of the ancients. The French have

now their first general historian, Mezeray, a writer esteemed for his lively style and bold sense, but little read, of course, in an age like the last or our own, which have demanded an exactness in matter of fact, and an extent of

historical erudition, which was formerly unknown. We now began, in England, to cultivate historical composition, and with so much success, that the present period was far more productive of such works as deserve remembrance than a whole century that next followed. But the most

considerable of these have already been mentioned. English histories.

Lord Herbert of Cherbury's History of Henry VIII. ought here to be added to the list, as a book of good authority, relatively at least to any that preceded, and written in a manly and judicious spirit.<sup>1</sup> Camden's Life of Elizabeth is also a solid and valuable history. Bacon's Life of Henry VII. is something more: it is the first instance in our language of the application of philosophy to reasoning on public events in the manner of the ancients and the Italians. Praise upon Henry is too largely bestowed: but it was in the nature of Bacon to admire too much a crafty and selfish policy; and he thought also, no doubt, that so near an ancestor of his own sovereign should not be treated with severe impartiality.

<sup>1</sup> [Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII. was composed with great assistance from Thomas Manners, of a Gloucestershire family, who collected materials: whether

he wrote any part is not clear. Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses* (Ellis's edition), vol. iii. p. 79. — 1853.]

SECTION V.

On the General State of Literature.

37. Of the Italian and other Continental universities, we have little to say beyond what may be collected from the general tenor of this literary history, that they contributed little to those departments of knowledge to which we have paid most attention, and, adhering pertinaciously to their ancient studies, were left behind in the advance of the human mind. They were, indeed, not less crowded with scholars than before, being the necessary and prescribed road to lucrative professions. In theology, law, and medicine, — sciences the two former of which, at least, did not claim to be progressive, — they might sustain a respectable posture: in philosophy, and even in polite letters, they were less prominent.

38. The English universities are, in one point of view, very different from those of the rest of Europe. Their great endowments created a resident class, neither teachers nor students, who might devote an unbroken leisure to learning with the advantage of that command of books which no other course of life could have afforded. It is true that in no age has the number of these been great; but the diligence of a few is enough to cast a veil over the laziness of many. The century began with an extraordinary piece of fortune to the University of Oxford, which formed in the seventeenth century, whatever it may since have been, one great cause of her literary distinction. Sir Thomas Bodley, with a munificence which has rendered his name more immortal than the foundation of a family could have done, bestowed on the university a library collected by him at great cost, building a magnificent room for its reception, and bequeathed large funds for its increase. The building was completed in 1606; and Casaubon has, very shortly afterwards, given such an account of the university itself, as well as of the Bodleian Library, as will perhaps be interesting to the reader, though it contains some of those mistakes into which a stranger is apt to fall.

Bodleian  
Library  
founded.

39. "I wrote you word," he says in July, 1613, to one of

his correspondents, "a month since, that I was going to Oxford in order to visit that university and its library, of which I had heard much. Every thing proved beyond my expectation. The colleges are numerous, most of them very rich. The revenues of these colleges maintain above two thousand students, generally of respectable parentage, and some even of the first nobility: for what we call the habits of pedagogues (*pædagogica vitæ ratio*) is not found in these English colleges. Learning is here cultivated in a liberal style; the heads of houses live handsomely, even splendidly, like men of rank. Some of them can spend ten thousand livres [about £1,000 at that time, if I mistake not] by the year. I much approved the mode in which pecuniary concerns are kept distinct from the business of learning.<sup>1</sup> Many still are found, who emulate the liberality of their predecessors. Hence new buildings rise every day; even some new colleges are raised from the foundation; some are enlarged, such as that of Merton, over which Saville presides, and several more. There is one begun by Cardinal Wolsey, which, if it should be completed, will be worthy of the greatest admiration. But he left at his death many buildings, which he had begun, in an unfinished state, and which no one expects to see complete. None of the colleges, however, attracted me so much as the Bodleian Library, a work rather for a king than a private man. It is certain that Bodley, living or dead, must have expended 200,000 livres on that building. The ground-plot is the figure of the letter T. The part which represents the perpendicular stem was formerly built by some prince, and is very handsome: the rest was added by Bodley with no less magnificence. In the lower part is a divinity school, to which perhaps nothing in Europe is comparable. It is vaulted with peculiar skill. The upper story is the library itself, very well built, and fitted with an immense quantity of books. Do not imagine that such plenty of manuscripts can be found here as in the Royal Library (of Paris): there are not a few manuscripts in England, but nothing to what the king possesses. But the number of printed books is wonderful, and increasing every year; for Bodley has bequeathed a considerable revenue for that purpose. As long

<sup>1</sup> "Res studiosorum et rationes separate sunt, quod valde probat." I have given the translation which seemed best; but I may be mistaken.

as I remained at Oxford, I passed whole days in the library; for books cannot be taken out, but the library is open to all scholars for seven or eight hours every day. You might always see, therefore, many of these greedily enjoying the banquet prepared for them, which gave me no small pleasure."<sup>1</sup>

40. The Earl of Pembroke, Selden, and above all, Archbishop Laud, greatly improved the Bodleian Library. It became, especially through the munificence of that prelate, extremely rich in Oriental manuscripts. The Duke of Buckingham presented a collection made by Erpenius to the public library at Cambridge, which, though far behind that of the sister university, was enriched by many donations, and became very considerable. Usher formed the library of Trinity College, Dublin; an university founded on the English model, with noble revenues, and a corporate body of fellows and scholars to enjoy them.

41. A catalogue of the Bodleian Library was published by James in 1620. It contains about 20,000 articles. Catalogue of Bodleian Library. Of these, no great number are in English, and such as there are chiefly of a later date than the year 1600: Bodley, perhaps, had been rather negligent of poetry and plays. The editor observes, that there were in the library three or four thousand volumes in modern languages. This catalogue is not classed, but alphabetical; which James mentions as something new, remarking at the same time the difficulty of classification, and that in the German catalogues we find grammars entered under the head of philosophy. One published by Draud, *Bibliotheca Classica, sive Catalogus Officinalis*, Frankfort, 1625, is hardly worth mention. It professes to be a general list of printed books; but, as the number seems to be not more than 30,000, all in Latin, it must be very defective. About two-fifths of the whole are theological. A catalogue of the library of Sion College, founded in 1631, was printed in 1650: it contains eight or nine thousand volumes.<sup>2</sup>

42. The library of Leyden had been founded by the first Prince of Orange. Scaliger bequeathed his own to Continental Libraries. it; and it obtained the Oriental manuscripts of Golius. A catalogue had been printed by Peter Bertius as early as 1597.<sup>3</sup> Many public and private libraries either now began

<sup>1</sup> Cambr. Epist. 809.

<sup>2</sup> In Musæo Britannico.

<sup>3</sup> Jugier, Hist. Litteraria, c. 8.



to be formed in France, or received great accessions; among the latter, those of the historian De Thou, and the president Segulier.<sup>1</sup> No German library, after that of Vienna, had been so considerable as one formed in the course of several ages by the Electors Palatine at Heidelberg. It contained many rare manuscripts. On the capture of the city by Tilly in 1622, he sent a number of these to Rome; and they long continued to sleep in the recesses of the Vatican. Napoleon, emulous of such a precedent, obtained thirty-eight of the Heidelberg manuscripts by the Treaty of Tolentino, which were transmitted to Paris. On the restitution of these in 1815, it was justly thought that prescription was not to be pleaded by Rome for the rest of the plunder, especially when she was recovering what she had lost by the same right of spoliation; and the whole collection has been replaced in the library of Heidelberg.

43. The Italian academies have been often represented as partaking in the alleged decline of literary spirit during the first part of the seventeenth century. Nor is this reproach a new one. Boccacini, after the commencement of this period, tells us that these institutions once so famous had fallen into decay; their ardent zeal in literary exercises and discussions having abated by time, so that, while they had once been frequented by private men, and esteemed by princes, they were now abandoned and despised by all. They petitioned Apollo, therefore, in a chapter of his *Ragguagli di Parnasso*, for a reform. But the god replies, that all things have their old age and decay, and as nothing can prevent the neatest pair of slippers from wearing out, so nothing can rescue academies from a similar lot; hence he can only advise them to suppress the worst, and to supply their places by others.<sup>2</sup> If only such a counsel were required, the institution of academies in general would not perish. And, in fact, we really find that while some societies of this class came to nothing, as is always the case with self-constituted bodies, the seventeenth century had births of its own to boast, not inferior to the older progeny of the last age. The Academy of Humorists at Rome was one of these. It arose casually at the marriage of a young nobleman of the Mancini family, and took the same line as many have done, reciting verses and discourses, or occasionally representing plays.

<sup>1</sup> Jugier, *Hist. Littéraire* c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ragg.* xviii. c. 1.

The tragedy of Demetrius, by Rocco, one of this academy, is reckoned among the best of the age. The Apatisti of Florence took their name from Fioretti, who had assumed the appellation of Udeno Nisielo, Academico Apatista. The Rozzi of Siena, whom the government had suppressed in 1568, revived again in 1605, and rivalled another society of the same city, the Intronati. The former especially dedicated their time to pastoral in the rustic dialect (*commedia rusticale*), a species of dramatic writing that might amuse at the moment, and was designed for no other end, though several of these farces are extant.<sup>1</sup>

44. The Academy Della Crusca, which had more solid objects for the advantage of letters in view, has been mentioned in another place. But that of the Lincei, The Lincei. founded by Frederic Cesi, stands upon a higher ground than any of the rest. This young man was born at Rome in 1585, son of the Duke of Acqua Sparta, a father and a family known only for their pride and ignorance. But nature had created in Cesi a philosophic mind: in conjunction with a few of similar dispositions, he gave his entire regard to science, and projected himself, at the age of eighteen, an academy, that is, a private association of friends for intellectual pursuits, which, with reference to their desire of piercing with acute discernment into the depths of truth, he denominated the Lynxæ. Their device was that animal, with its eyes turned towards heaven, and tearing a Cerberus with its claws; thus intimating that they were prepared for war against error and falsehood. The church, always suspicious, and inclined to make common cause with all established tenets, gave them some trouble, though neither theology nor politics entered into their scheme. This embraced, as in their academies, poetry and elegant literature; but physical science was their peculiar object. Porta, Galileo, Colonna, and many other distinguished men, both of Italy and the Transalpine countries, were enrolled among the Lynxæ; and Cesi is said to have framed rather a visionary plan of a general combination of philosophers, in the manner of the Pythagoreans, which should extend itself to every part of Europe. The constitutions of this imaginary order were even published in 1624: they are such as could not have been realized, but, from the organization and secrecy that seem to have been their elo-

<sup>1</sup> *Sala*, vol. xii.

ments, might not improbably have drawn down a prosecution upon themselves, or even rendered the name of philosophy obnoxious. Cesi died in 1680; and his Academy of Lynxes did not long survive the loss of their chief.<sup>1</sup>

45. The tide of public opinion had hitherto set regularly in one direction; ancient times, ancient learning, ancient wisdom and virtue, were regarded with unqualified veneration; the very course of nature was hardly believed to be the same, and a common degeneracy was thought to have overspread the earth and its inhabitants. This had been at its height in the first century after the revival of letters; the prejudice in favor of the past, always current with the old, who affect to dictate the maxims of experience, conspiring with the genuine lustre of classical literature and ancient history, which dazzled the youthful scholar. But this aristocracy of learning was now assailed by a new power which had risen up in sufficient strength to dispute the pre-eminence. We, said Bacon, are the true ancients: what we call the antiquity of the world was but its infancy. This thought, equally just and brilliant, was caught up and echoed by many: it will be repeatedly found in later works. It became a question whether the moderns had not really left behind their progenitors; and though it has been hinted, that a dwarf on a giant's shoulders sees farther than the giant, this is, in one sense, to concede the point in dispute.<sup>2</sup>

46. Tassoni was one of the first who combated the established prejudice by maintaining that modern times are not inferior to ancient: it well became his intrepid disposition.<sup>3</sup> But Lancilotti, an Italian ecclesiastic, and member of several academies, pursued this subject in an elaborate work, intended to prove, — first, that the world was neither morally worse nor more afflicted by calamities than it had been; secondly, that the intellectual abilities of mankind had not degenerated. It bears the general title, *L'Hoggidi, To-Day*; and is throughout a ridicule of those whom he calls *Hoggidiani*, perpetual declaimers against the present state of things. He is a very copious and learned writer, and no friend to antiquity; each chapter being entitled *Disinganno*, and intended to remove

<sup>1</sup> Balf., xi. 102; Tiraboschi, xi. 42, 243.

<sup>2</sup> "An quemadmodum pygmeus humoris gigantis insidens longius quam gigas prospiciat, neque tamen se gigante majorem habere aut sibi multum tribuere potest, ita nos veterum laboribus vigillisque in nostros usus conversis adjicere aliquid, non supercilium tollere, aut parvi facere, qui ante nos fuerunt, debemus." — *Cyprianus*, Vita Campanelle, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Balf., xi. 331.

Prejudice  
for anti-  
quity dis-  
minished.

some false prejudice. The first part of this work appeared in 1623; the second, after the author's death, not till 1658. Lancilotti wrote another book, with somewhat a similar object, entitled *Farfalloni degl' Antichi Istorici*, and designed to turn the ancient historians into ridicule; with a good deal of pleasantry, but chiefly on account of stories which no one in his time would have believed. The same ground was taken soon afterwards by an English divine, George Hakewill, in his *Apology, or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World*, published in 1627. This is designed to prove, that there is not that perpetual and universal decay in nature which many suppose. It is an elaborate refutation of many absurd notions which seem to have prevailed; some believing that even physical nature, the sun and stars, the earth and waters, were the worse for wear. A greater number thought this true of man: his age, his size, his strength, his powers of mind, were all supposed to have been deteriorated. Hakewill patiently and learnedly refuted all this. The moral character of antiquity he shows to be much exaggerated, animadverting especially on the Romans. The most remarkable, and certainly the most disputable, chapters are those which relate to the literary merits of ancient and modern times. He seems to be one of the first who ventured to put in a claim for the latter. In this he anticipates Wotton, who had more to say. Hakewill goes much too far in calling Sidney's *Arcadia* "nothing inferior to the choicest piece among the ancients;" and even thinks "he should not much wrong Virgil by matching him with Du Bartas." The learning shown in this treatise is very extensive; but Hakewill has no taste, and cannot perceive any real superiority in the ancients. Compared with Lancilotti, he is much inferior in liveliness, perhaps even in learning; but I have not observed that he has borrowed any thing from the Italian, whose publication was but four years earlier.

47. Browne's *Inquiry into Vulgar Errors* displays a great deal of erudition, but scarcely raises a high notion of Browne himself as a philosopher, or of the state of physical knowledge in England. The errors he indicates are such as none but illiterate persons, we should think, were likely to hold; and I believe that few on the Continent, so late as 1646, would have required to have them exploded with such an ostentation of proof. Who did not know that

Browne's  
Vulgar  
Errors.



the phoenix is a fable? Browne was where the learned in Europe had been seventy years before, and seems to have been one of those who saturate their minds with bad books till they have little room for any thing new that is better. A man of so much credulity and such an irregular imagination as Browne was almost sure to believe in witchcraft and all sorts of spiritual agencies. In no respect did he go in advance of his age, unless we make an exception for his declaration against persecution. He seems to have been fond of those trifling questions which the bad taste of the schoolmen and their contemporaries introduced; as whether a man has fewer ribs than a woman, whether Adam and Eve had navels, whether Methusaleh was the oldest man; the problems of children put to adults. With a strong curiosity and a real love of truth, Browne is a striking instance of a merely empirical mind: he is at sea with sails and a rudder, but without a compass or log-book; and has so little notion of any laws of nature, or of any inductive reasoning either as to efficient or final causes, that he never seems to judge any thing to be true or false except by experiment.

48. In concluding our review of the sixteenth century, we selected Pinelli, as a single model of the literary character, which, loving and encouraging knowledge, is yet too little distinguished by any writings to fall naturally within the general subject of these volumes. The period which we now bring to a close will furnish us with a much more considerable instance. Nicolas Peiresc was born in 1580, of an ancient family in Provence, which had for some generations held judicial offices in the Parliament of Aix. An extraordinary thirst for every kind of knowledge characterized Peiresc from his earliest youth; and being of a weak constitution as well as ample fortune, though he retained, like his family, an honorable post in the parliament, his time was principally devoted to the multifarious pursuits of an enlightened scholar. Like Pinelli, he delighted in the rarities of art and antiquity; but his own superior genius, and the vocation of that age towards science, led him on to a far more extensive field of inquiry. We have the life of Peiresc written by his countryman and intimate friend Gassendi; and no one who has any sympathy with science or with a noble character will read it without pleasure. Few books, indeed, of that period are more full of casual information.

Life and  
character of  
Peiresc.

49. Peiresc travelled much in the early part of his life: he was at Rome in 1600, and came to England and Holland in 1606. The hard drinking, even of our learned men,<sup>1</sup> disconcerted his southern stomach; but he was repaid by the society of Camden, Saville, and Cotton. The king received Peiresc courteously, and he was present at the opening of parliament. On returning to his native province, he began to form his extensive collections of marbles and medals, but especially of natural history in every line. He was, perhaps, the first who observed the structure of zoöphytes, though he seems not to have suspected their animal nature. Petrifications occupied much of his time; and he framed a theory of them which Gassendi explains at length, but which, as might be expected, is not the truth.<sup>2</sup> Botany was among his favorite studies; and Europe owes to him, according to Gassendi, the Indian jessamine, the gourd of Mecca, the real Egyptian papyrus, which is not that described by Prosper Alpinus. He first planted ginger, as well as many other Oriental plants, in an European garden, and also the cocoa-nut, from which, however, he could not obtain fruit.

50. Peiresc was not less devoted to astronomy: he had no sooner heard of the discoveries of Galileo than he set himself to procure a telescope, and had, in the course of the same year, 1610, the pleasure of observing the moons of Jupiter. It even occurred to him that these might serve to ascertain the longitude, though he did not follow up the idea. Galileo indeed, with a still more inventive mind, and with more of mathematics, seems to have stood in the way of Peiresc. He took, as far as appears, no great pains to publish his researches; contenting himself with the intercourse of literary men who passed near him, or with whom he could maintain correspondence. Several discoveries are ascribed to him by Gassendi: of their originality I cannot venture to decide. "From his retreat," says another biographer, "Peiresc gave more encouragement to letters than any prince, more even than the Cardinal de Richelieu, who, some time afterwards, founded the French Academy. Worthy to have been called by Bayle the *attorney-general* of literature, he kept always on the level of progressive science, published manuscripts at his own expense, followed the labors of the learned throughout Europe, and gave them an active impulse by his own aid."

<sup>1</sup> Gassendi, *Vita Peirescii*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> P. 147.

Scaliger, Salmasius, Holstenius, Kircher, Mersenne, Grotius, Valois, are but some of the great names of Europe whom he assisted by various kinds of liberality.<sup>1</sup> He published nothing himself; but some of his letters have been collected.

51. The character of Peiresc was amiable and unreserved among his friends; but he was too much absorbed in the love of knowledge for insipid conversation. For the same reason, his biographer informs us, he disliked the society of women, gaining nothing valuable from the trifles and scandal upon which alone they could converse.<sup>2</sup> Possibly the society of both sexes at Aix, in the age of Peiresc, was such as, with no excessive fastidiousness, he might avoid. In his eagerness for new truths, he became somewhat credulous; an error not perhaps easy to be avoided, while the accumulation of facts proceeded more rapidly than the ascertainment of natural laws. But, for a genuine liberality of mind and extensive attainments in knowledge, very few can be compared to Peiresc; nor, among those who have resembled him in this employment of wealth and leisure, do I know that any names have descended to posterity with equal lustre, except our two countrymen of the next generation, who approached so nearly to his character and course of life, — Boyle and Evelyn.

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Universelle.

<sup>2</sup> Gassendi, p. 219.

**INTRODUCTION**  
**TO THE**  
**LITERATURE OF EUROPE**  
**IN THE**  
**FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH**  
**CENTURIES.**

**By HENRY HALLAM, LL.D., F.R.A.S.,**  
**FOREIGN ASSOCIATE OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE.**

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**VOLUME IV.**



[illegible]

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INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
LITERATURE OF EUROPE  
IN THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND  
SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

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PART IV.

ON THE LITERATURE OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE  
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

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CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF ANCIENT LITERATURE IN EUROPE, FROM 1450 TO 1700.

SECTION I.

Dutch Scholars — Jesuit and Jansenist Philologists — Delphin Editions —  
French Scholars — English Scholars — Bentley.

1. THE death of Salmasius, about the beginning of this period, left a chasm in critical literature which no one was equal to fill. But the nearest to this giant of philology was James Frederic Gronovius, a native of Hamburg, but drawn, like several more of his countrymen, to the universities of Holland, the peculiarly learned state of Europe through the seventeenth century. The principal labors of Gronovius were those of correcting the text of Latin writers: in Greek we find very little due to him.<sup>1</sup> His notes form an useful and considerable part of those which are collected in what are generally styled the Variorum editions, published, chiefly after 1660, by the Dutch booksellers.

<sup>1</sup> Baillet, *Critiques Grammaticales*, n. 548; Blount; Biogr. Univ.

These contain selections from the older critics, some of them, especially those first edited, indifferently made, and often mutilated; others with more attention to preserve entire the original notes. These, however, are for the most part only critical, as if explanatory observations were below the notice of an editor; though, as Le Clerc says, those of Manutius on Cicero's epistles cost him much more time than modern editors have given to their conjectures.<sup>1</sup> In general, the *Variorum* editions were not greatly prized, with the exception of those by the two Gronovii and Grævius.<sup>2</sup>

2. The place of the elder Gronovius, in the latter part of this present period, was filled by his son. James Gronovius, by indefatigable labor, and by a greater number of editions which bear his name, may be reckoned, if not a greater philologist, one not less celebrated than his father. He was at least a better Greek critic; and in this language, though far below those who were about to arise, and who did in fact eclipse him long before his death, — Bentley and Burman, — he kept a high place for several years.<sup>3</sup> Grævius, another German, whom the Dutch universities had attracted and retained, contributed to the *Variorum* editions, chiefly those of Latin authors, an erudition not less copious than that of any contemporary scholar.

3. The philological character of Gerard Vossius himself, if we might believe some partial testimonies, fell short of that of his son Isaac; whose observations on Pomponius Mela, and an edition of Catullus, did him extraordinary credit, and have placed him among the first philologists of this age. He was of a more lively genius, and perhaps hardly less erudition, than his father, but with a paradoxical judgment, and has certainly rendered much less service to letters.<sup>4</sup> Another son of a great father, Nicolas Heinsius, has by none been placed on a level with him; but his editions of Prudentius and Claudian are better than any that had preceded them.

4. Germany fell lower and lower in classical literature. A writer as late as 1714 complains, that only modern books of Latin were taught in the schools, and that the students in the universities despised all

<sup>1</sup> Parrhasiana, l. 283.

<sup>2</sup> A list of the *Variorum* editions will be found in Baillet, *Critique Grammaticale* 604.

<sup>3</sup> Baillet, n. 548; Nicéron, li. 177.

<sup>4</sup> Nicéron, vol. xiii.

grammatical learning. The study "not of our own language, which we entirely neglect, but of French," he reckons among the causes of this decay in ancient learning: the French translations of the classics led many to imagine that the original could be dispensed with.<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel Spanheim, Spanheim. envoy from the court of Brandenburg to that of Louis XIV., was a distinguished exception: his edition of Julian, and his notes on several other writers, attest an extensive learning, which has still preserved his name in honor. As the century drew nigh to its close, Germany began to revive: a few men of real philological learning, especially Fabricius, appeared as heralds of those greater names which adorn her literary annals in the next age.

5. The Jesuits had long been conspicuously the classical scholars of France; in their colleges the purest and most elegant Latinity was supposed to be found; they had early cultivated these graces of literature, while all polite writing was confined to the Latin language, and they still preserved them in its comparative disuse. "The Jesuits," Huet says, "write and speak Latin well; but their style is almost always too rhetorical. This is owing to their keeping regencies [an usual phrase for academical exercises] from their early youth, which causes them to speak incessantly in public, and become accustomed to a sustained and polished style, above the tone of common subjects."<sup>2</sup> Jouvancy, whose Latin orations were published in 1700, has had no equal, if we may trust a panegyrist, since Maffei and Muretus.<sup>3</sup>

Jesuit colleges in France

6. The Jansenists appeared ready at one time to wrest this palm from their inveterate foes. Lancelot threw some additional lustre round Port Royal by the Latin and Greek grammars, which are more frequently called by the name of that famous cloister than by his own. Both were received with great approbation in the French schools, except, I suppose, where the Jesuits predominated; and their reputation lasted for many years. They were never so popular, though well known, in this country. "The public," says Baillet of the Greek grammar, which is rather the more eminent of the two, "bears witness that nothing of its kind has been more finished. The order is clear and concise. We find in it many remarks, both judi-

Port-Royal writers: Lancelot.

<sup>1</sup> Burekhardt, *De Lingue Latine hodie neglecte Causis Oratio*, p. 84

<sup>2</sup> *Huetiana*, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> *Biogr Univ*



cious and important for the full knowledge of the language. Though Lancelot has chiefly followed Caninius, Sylburgius, Sanctius, and Vossius, his arrangement is new, and he has selected what is most valuable in their works.<sup>1</sup> In fact, he professes to advance nothing of his own, being more indebted, he says, to Caninius than to any one else. The method of Clenardus he disapproves, and thinks that of Ramus intricate. He adopts the division into three declensions; but his notions of the proper meaning of the tenses are strangely confused and erroneous. Several other mistakes of an obvious nature, as we should now say, will occur in his syntax; and, upon the whole, the Port-Royal Grammar does not give us a high idea of the critical knowledge of the seventeenth century, as to the more difficult language of antiquity.

7. The Latin, on the other hand, had been so minutely and laboriously studied, that little more than gleanings after a great harvest could be obtained. The Aristarchus of Vossius, and his other grammatical works, though partly not published till this period, have been mentioned in the last volume. Perizonius, a professor at Franeker, and in many respects one of the most learned of this age, published a good edition of the Minerva of Sanctius in 1687. This celebrated grammar had become very scarce, as well as that of Scioppius, which contained nothing but remarks upon Sanctius. Perizonius combined the two with notes more ample than those of Scioppius, and more bold in differing from the Spanish grammarian.

8. If other editions of the classical authors have been preferred by critics, none, at least of this period, have been more celebrated than those which Louis XIV., at the suggestion of the Duke de Montausier, caused to be prepared for the use of the Dauphin. The object in view was to elucidate the Latin writers, both by a continual gloss in the margin, and by such notes as should bring a copious mass of ancient learning to bear on the explanation, not of the more difficult passages alone, but of all those in which an ordinary reader might require some aid. The former of these is less useful and less satisfactorily executed than the latter: as for the notes, it must be owned, that, with much that is superfluous even to tolerable scholars, they bring together a great deal of very serviceable illustration. The choice of

Latin  
grammar:  
Perizonius.

Delphin  
edition.

<sup>1</sup> Baillet, n. 714

authors as well as of editors was referred to Huet, who fixed the number of the former at forty. The idea of an index, on a more extensive plan than in any earlier editions, was also due to Huet, who had designed to fuse those of each work into one more general, as a standing historical analysis of the Latin language.<sup>1</sup> These editions are of very unequal merit, as might be expected from the number of persons employed; a list of whom will be found in Baillet.<sup>2</sup>

9. Tanaquil Faber, thus better known than by his real name, Tanneguy le Févre, a man learned, animated, not fearing the reproach of paradox, acquired a considerable name among French critics by several editions, as well as by other writings in philology. But none of his literary productions were so celebrated as his daughter, Anne Le Févre, afterwards Madame Dacier. The knowledge of Greek, though once not very uncommon in a woman, had become prodigious in the days of Louis XIV.; and, when this distinguished lady taught Homer and Sappho to speak French prose, she appeared a phoenix in the eyes of her countrymen. She was undoubtedly a person of very rare talents and estimable character: her translations are numerous, and reputed to be correct, though Nicéron has observed that she did not raise Homer in the eyes of those who were not prejudiced in his favor.<sup>3</sup> Her husband was a scholar of kindred mind and the same pursuits. Their union was facetiously called the wedding of Latin and Greek. But each of this learned couple was skilled in both languages. Dacier was a great translator: his Horace is perhaps the best known of his versions; but the Poetics of Aristotle have done him most honor. The Daciers had to fight the battle of antiquity against a generation both ignorant and vain-glorious, yet keen-sighted in the detection of blemishes, and disposed to avenge the wrongs of their fathers, who had been trampled upon by pedants, with the help of a new pedantry, that of the court and the mode. With great learning, they had a competent share of good sense, but not perhaps a sufficiently discerning taste, or liveliness enough of style, to maintain a cause that had so many prejudices of the world now enlisted against it.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Huetiana, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Critique Grammaire, n. 335.

<sup>3</sup> [It has been remarked, that the edition of Callimachus, with critical notes, ought to

have been mentioned as the *chef-d'œuvre* of one whom Bentley calls *faminiarum doctissima*. — 1747.]

<sup>4</sup> Baillet; Nicéron, vol. III.; Bibliothèque

10. Henry Valois might have been mentioned before for his edition of Ammianus Marcellinus, in 1636, which established his philological reputation. Many other works in the same line of criticism followed. He is among the great ornaments of learning in this period. Nor was France destitute of others that did her honor. Cotelier, it is said, deserved by his knowledge of Greek to be placed on a level with the great scholars of former times. Yet there seems to have been some decline, at least towards the close of the century, in that prodigious erudition which had distinguished the preceding period. "For we know no one," says Le Clerc, about 1699, "who equals in learning, in diligence, and in the quantity of his works, the Scaligers, the Lipsii, the Casaubons, the Salmasii, the Meursii, the Vossii, the Seldens, the Gronovii, and many more of former times."<sup>1</sup> Though perhaps in this reflection there was something of the customary bias against the present generation, we must own that the writings of scholars were less massive, and consequently gave less apparent evidence of industry, than formerly. But in classical philology, at least, a better day was about to arise; and the first omen of it came from a country not yet much known in that literature.

11. It has been observed in a former passage, that, while England was very far from wanting men of extensive erudition, she had not been at all eminent in ancient or classical literature. The proof which the absence of critical writings, or even of any respectable editions, furnishes, appears weighty; nor can it be repelled by sufficient testimony. In the middle of the century, James Duport, Greek professor at Cambridge, deserves honor by standing almost alone. "He appears," says a late biographer, "to have been the main instrument by which literature was upheld in this university during the civil disturbances of the seventeenth century; and, though little known at present, he enjoyed an almost transcendent reputation for a great length of time among his contemporaries as well as in the generation which immediately succeeded."<sup>2</sup> Duport, however, has little claim to this reputation, except by translations of the writings of

Henry Valois.  
Complains  
of decay of  
learning.

English  
learning:  
Duport.

Universelle, x. 205, xxii. 178, xxiv. 241, 261; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>1</sup> Parrhasiana, vol. i. p. 225. "Je viens d'apprendre," says Charles Patin in one of his letters, "que M. Gronovius est mort à Leyden. Il restoit presque tout seul du

nombre des savans d'Hollande. Il n'est plus dans ce pays-là des gens faits comme Jos. Scaliger, Baudius, Heinsius, Salmasius, et Grotius." — p. 582.

<sup>2</sup> Museum Criticum, vol. II. p. 672 (by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol).

Solomon, the Book of Job, and the Psalms, into Greek hexameters; concerning which his biographer gently intimates, that "his notions of versification were not formed in a severe or critical school;" and by what has certainly been more esteemed, his *Homeri Guomologia*, which Le Clerc and Bishop Monk agree to praise, as very useful to the student of Homer. Duport gave also some lectures on Theophrastus about 1656, which were afterwards published in Needham's edition of that author. "In these," says Le Clerc, "he explains words with much exactness, and so as to show that he understood the analogy of the language."<sup>1</sup> "They are, upon the whole, calculated," says the Bishop of Gloucester, "to give no unfavorable opinion of the state of Greek learning in the university at that memorable crisis."

12. It cannot be fairly said, that our universities declined in general learning under the usurpation of Cromwell. They contained, on the contrary, more extraordinary men than in any earlier period, but not generally well affected to the predominant power. Greek, however, seems not much to have flourished, even immediately after the Restoration. Barrow, who was chosen Greek professor in 1660, complains that no one attended his lectures. "I sit like an Attic owl," he says, "driven out from the society of all other birds."<sup>2</sup> According indeed to the scheme of study retained from a more barbarous age, no knowledge of the Greek language appears to have been required from the students, as necessary for their degrees. And if we may believe a satirical writer of the time of Charles II., but one whose satire had great circulation and was not taxed with falsehood, the general state of education, both in the schools and universities, was as narrow, pedantic, and unprofitable as can be conceived.<sup>3</sup>

Greek not much studied.

13. We were not, nevertheless, destitute of men distinguished for critical skill, even from the commencement of

<sup>1</sup> *Bibliothèque Choiseul*, xiv. 12.

<sup>2</sup> See a biographical anecdote of Barrow prefixed to Hugbess's edition of his works. This contains a sketch of studies pursued in the University of Cambridge from the twelfth to the seventeenth century, and indeed, that such as I should have been glad to have seen before — p. 22. So, attention in the schools, so far as they related to study, was much after the time of Henry VIII. or Edward VI.

<sup>3</sup> "The studies of the Cambridge schools

about 1550 consisted of logic, ethics, natural philosophy, and metaphysics; the latter branch of philosophy even then declined extensively, to such an extent that almost nothing was taught but the logic, metaphysics, and ethics of Aristotle." — *Notes of a scholar of Cambridge*, p. 8. — 1740.

<sup>4</sup> Barrow's *Grammar and Exposition of the Gospels of the Evangelists*. This work, which was published in 1660, and went through two editions by 1665.



this period. The first was a very learned divine, Thomas Gataker, one whom a foreign writer has placed among the six Protestants most conspicuous, in his judgment, for depth of reading. His *Cinnus*, sive *Adversaria Miscellanea*, published in 1651, to which a longer work, entitled *Adversaria Posthuma*, is subjoined in later editions, may be introduced here; since, among a far greater number of scriptural explanations, both of these miscellanies contain many relating to profane antiquity. He claims a higher place for his edition of *Marcus Antoninus* the next year. This is the earliest edition, if I am not mistaken, of any classical writer published in England with original annotations. Those of Gataker evince a very copious learning; and the edition is still, perhaps, reckoned the best that has been given of this author.

14. Thomas Stanley, author of the *History of Ancient Philosophy*, undertook a more difficult task, and gave in 1663 his celebrated edition of *Æschylus*. It was, as every one has admitted, by far superior to any that had preceded it; nor can Stanley's real praise be effaced, though it may be diminished, by an unfortunate charge that has been brought against him, of having appropriated to himself the conjectures, most of them unpublished, of Casaubon, Dorat, and Scaliger, to the number of at least three hundred emendations of the text. It will hardly be reckoned a proof of our nationality, that a living English scholar was the first to detect and announce this plagiarism of a critic, in whom we had been accustomed to take pride, from these foreigners.<sup>1</sup> After these plumes have been withdrawn, Stanley's *Æschylus* will remain a great monument of critical learning.

15. Meric Casaubon by his notes on *Persius*, *Antoninus*, and *Diogenes Laertius*; Pearson by those on the last author, Gale on *Iamblichus*, Price on *Apuleius*, Hudson by his editions of *Thucydides* and *Josephus*, Potter by that of *Lycophron*, Baxter of *Anacreon*, — attested the progress of classical learning in a soil so well fitted to give it nourishment. The same William Baxter published the first grammar, not quite elementary, which had appeared in England, entitled *De Analogia, seu Arte Latine Lingue*

<sup>1</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, xix. 494; *Museum Criticum*, ii. 496 (both by the Bishop of London).



*Commentarius.* It relates principally to etymology, and to the deduction of the different parts of the verb from a stem, which he conceives to be the imperative mood. Baxter was a man of some ability, but, in the style of critics, offensively contemptuous towards his brethren of the craft.

16. We must hasten to the greatest of English critics in this, or possibly any other age, — Richard Bentley. His first book was the epistle to Mill, subjoined to the latter's edition of the chronicle of John Malala, a Greek writer of the Lower Empire.<sup>1</sup> In a desultory and almost garrulous strain, Bentley pours forth an immense store of novel learning and of acute criticism, especially on his favorite subject, which was destined to become his glory, — the scattered relics of the ancient dramatists. The style of Bentley, always terse and lively, sometimes humorous and dryly sarcastic, whether he wrote in Latin or in English, could not but augment the admiration which his learning challenged. Gravins and Spanheim pronounced him the rising star of British literature; and a correspondence with the former began in 1692, which continued in unbroken friendship till his death.

17. But the rare qualities of Bentley were more abundantly displayed, and before the eyes of a more numerous tribunal, in his famous dissertation on the epistles ascribed to Phalaris. This was provoked, in the first instance, by a few lines of eulogy on these epistles by Sir William Temple, who pretended to find in them indubitable marks of authenticity. Bentley, in a dissertation subjoined to Wotton's *Reflections on Modern and Ancient Learning*, gave tolerably conclusive proofs of the contrary. A young man of high family and respectable learning, Charles Boyle, had published an edition of the *Epistles of Phalaris*, with some reflection on Bentley for personal incivility; a charge which he seems to have satisfactorily disproved. Bentley animadverted on this in his dissertation. Boyle, the next year, with the assistance of some leading men at Oxford, Aldrich, King, and Atterbury, published his *Examination of Bentley's Dissertation on Phalaris*; a book generally called, in familiar brevity, Boyle

<sup>1</sup> [I am indebted to Mr. Dyce for reminding me, that Mill only superintended the publication of Malala; the prolegomena having been written by Hody, the notes and Latin translation by Chlilmund, in the reign of Charles I. The notes, in-

deed, appear to have been written by John Gregory, whom Bishop Monk calls "a man of prodigious learning," not long before the Civil War. See a full account of this edition of Malala in *Life of Bentley*, i. 26. — 1847.]

against Bentley.<sup>1</sup> The Cambridge giant of criticism replied in an answer which goes by the name of Bentley against Boyle. It was the first great literary war that had been waged in England; and, like that of Troy, it has still the prerogative of being remembered, after the Epistles of Phalaris are almost as much buried as the walls of Troy itself. Both combatants were skilful in wielding the sword: the arms of Boyle, in Swift's language, were given him by all the gods; but his antagonist stood forward in no such figurative strength, master of a learning to which nothing parallel had been known in England, and that directed by an understanding prompt, discriminating, not idly sceptical, but still farther removed from trust in authority, sagacious in perceiving corruptions of language, and ingenious, at the least, in removing them; with a style rapid, concise, amusing, and superior to Boyle in that which he had chiefly to boast, a sarcastic wit.<sup>2</sup>

18. It may now seem extraordinary to us, even without looking at the anachronisms or similar errors which Bentley has exposed, that any one should be deceived by the Epistles of Phalaris. The rhetorical commonplaces, the cold declamation of the sophist, the care to please the reader, the absence of that simplicity with which a man who has never known restraint in disguising his thoughts or choosing his words is sure to express himself, strike us in the pretended letters of this buskined tyrant, the Icon Basilice of the ancient world. But this was doubtless thought evidence of their authenticity by many who might say, as others have done, in a happy vein of metaphor, that they seemed "not written with a pen, but with a sceptre." The argument from the use of the common dialect by a Sicilian tyrant, contemporary with Pythagoras, is of itself conclusive, and would leave no doubt in the present day.

<sup>1</sup> "The principal share in the undertaking fell to the lot of Atterbury: this was suspected at the time, and has since been placed beyond all doubt by the publication of a letter of his to Boyle." — Monk's Life of Bentley, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> "In point of classical learning, the joint stock of the conference bore no proportion to that of Bentley: their acquaintance with several of the books upon which they comment appears only to have begun upon that occasion, and sometimes they are imputed for their knowledge of them to their adversary; compared with his boundless erudition, their learning was

that of school-boys, and not always sufficient to preserve them from distressing mistakes. But profound literature was at that period confined to few, while wit and railery found numerous and eager readers. It may be doubtful whether Busby himself, by whom every one of the confederated hand had been educated, possessed knowledge which would have qualified him to enter the lists in such a controversy." — Monk's Bentley, p. 62. Warburton has justly said, that Bentley by his wit sold the Oxford men at their own weapons.

19. "It may be remarked," says the Bishop of Gloucester, "that a scholar at that time possessed neither the aids nor the encouragements which are now presented to smooth the paths of literature. The grammars of the Latin and Greek languages were imperfectly and erroneously taught; and the critical scholar must have felt severely the absence of sufficient indexes, particularly of the voluminous scholiasts, grammarians, and later writers of Greece, in the examination of which no inconsiderable portion of a life might be consumed. Bentley, relying upon his own exertions and the resources of his own mind, pursued an original path of criticism, in which the intuitive quickness and subtilty of his genius qualified him to excel. In the faculty of memory, so important for such pursuits, he has himself candidly declared that he was not particularly gifted. Consequently he practised throughout life the precaution of noting in the margin of his books the suggestions and conjectures which rushed into his mind during their perusal. To this habit of laying up materials in store, we may partly attribute the surprising rapidity with which some of his most important works were completed. He was also at the trouble of constructing for his own use indexes of authors quoted by the principal scholiasts, by Eustathius and other ancient commentators, of a nature similar to those afterwards published by Fabricius in his *Bibliotheca Græca*; which latter were the produce of the joint labor of various hands."<sup>1</sup>

Disadvantages of scholars in that age.

## SECT. II.—ON ANTIQUITIES.

Grævius and Gronovius — Fabretti — Numismatic Writers — Chronology.

20. THE two most industrious scholars of their time, Grævius and Gronovius, collected into one body such of the numerous treatises on Roman and Greek antiquities as they thought most worthy of preservation in an uniform and accessible work. These form the *Thesaurus Antiquitatum Romanarum*, by Grævius, in twelve volumes; the *Thesaurus Antiquitatum Græcarum*, by

Thesauri of Grævius and of Gronovius.

<sup>1</sup> Monk's *Life of Bentley*, p. 12.

Gronovius, in thirteen volumes; the former published in 1694, the first volumes of the latter in 1697. They comprehend many of the labors of the older antiquaries already commemorated from the middle of the sixteenth to that of the seventeenth century, and some also of a later date. Among these, in the collection of Grævius, are a treatise of Albert Rubens, son of the great painter, on the dress of the Romans, particularly the laticlave (Antwerp, 1665), the enlarged edition of Octavius Ferrarius on the same subject, several treatises by Spanheim and Ursatus, and the *Roma Antica* of Nardini, published in 1666. Gronovius gave a place in his twelfth volume (1702) to the very recent work of a young Englishman, Potter's *Antiquities*, which the author, at the request of the veteran antiquary, had so much enlarged, that the Latin translation in Gronovius is nearly double in length the first edition of the English.<sup>1</sup> The warm eulogies of Gronovius attest the merit of this celebrated work. Potter was but twenty-three years of age: he had of course availed himself of the writings of Meursius, but he has also contributed to supersede them. It has been said, that he is less exact in attending to the differences of times and places than our finer criticism requires.<sup>2</sup>

21. Bellori, in a long list of antiquarian writings, Falconieri Fabretti, in several more, especially his *Inscriptiones Athleticae*, maintained the honor of Italy in this province, so justly claimed as her own.<sup>3</sup> But no one has been accounted equal to Raphael Fabretti, by judges so competent as Maffei, Gravina, Fabroni, and Visconti.<sup>4</sup> His diligence in collecting inscriptions was only surpassed by his sagacity in explaining them; and his authority has been preferred to that of any other antiquary.<sup>5</sup> His time was spent in delving among ruins and vaults to explore the subterranean treasures of Latium: no heat nor cold nor rain, nor badness of road, could deter him from these solitary peregrinations. Yet the glory of Fabretti must be partly shared with his horse. This wise and faithful animal, named Marco Polo, had acquired, it is said, the habit of standing still, and as it were *pointing*, when he came near an antiquity; his master candidly owning

<sup>1</sup> The first edition of Potter's *Antiquities* was published in 1697 and 1698.

<sup>2</sup> *Biogr. Univ.*

<sup>3</sup> *Salfi*, vol. xi. p. 364.

<sup>4</sup> Fabretti's life has been written by two

very favorable biographers. — Fabroni in *Vitæ Italorum*, vol. vi.; and Visconti, in the *Biographie Universelle*.

<sup>5</sup> Fabroni, p. 187; *Biogr. Univ.*

that several things which would have escaped him had been detected by the antiquarian quadruped.<sup>1</sup> Fabretti's principal works are three dissertations on the Roman aqueducts, and one on the Trajan column. Little, says Fabroni, was known before about the Roman galleys or their naval affairs in general.<sup>2</sup> Fabretti was the first who reduced lapidary remains into classes, and arranged them so as to illustrate each other; a method, says one of his most distinguished successors, which has laid the foundations of the science.<sup>3</sup> A profusion of collateral learning is mingled with the main stream of all his investigations.

22. No one had ever come to the study of medals with such stores of erudition as Ezekiel Spanheim. The earlier writers on the subject, Vico, Erizzo, Angeloni, were not comparable to him, and had rather dwelt on the genuineness or rarity of coins than on their usefulness in illustrating history. Spanheim's *Dissertations on the Use of Medals*, the second improved edition of which appeared in 1671, first connected them with the most profound and critical research into antiquity.<sup>4</sup> Vaillant, travelling into the Levant, brought home great treasures of Greek coinage, especially those of the Seleucidæ; at once enriching the cabinets of the curious, and establishing historical truth. Medallie evidence, in fact, may be reckoned among those checks upon the negligence of historians, that, having been retrieved by industrious antiquaries, have created a cautious and discerning spirit which has been exercised in later times upon facts, and which, beginning in scepticism, passes onward to a more rational, and therefore more secure, conviction of what can fairly be proved. Jobert, in 1692, consolidated the researches of Spanheim, Vaillant, and other numismatic writers, in his book entitled *La Science des Médailles*, a better system of the science than had been published.<sup>5</sup>

23. It would, of course, not be difficult to fill these pages with brief notices of other books that fall within the extensive range of classical antiquity. But we have no space for more than a mere enumeration, which would give little satisfaction. Chronology has received various

Numismatics:  
Spanheim,  
Vaillant.

<sup>1</sup> Fabroni, p. 193

<sup>2</sup> P. 201.

<sup>3</sup> *Biogr. Univ.*

<sup>4</sup> *Bibl. Cheloni*, vol. xiii.

<sup>5</sup> *Biogr. Univ.*



attention in former volumes. Our learned Archbishop Usher might there have been named, since the first part of his *Annals of the Old Testament*, which goes down to the year of the world 3828, was published in 1650. The second part followed in 1654. This has been the chronology generally adopted by English historians, as well as by Bossuet, Calmet, and Rollin, so that for many years it might be called the orthodox scheme of Europe. No former annals of the world had been so exact in marking dates, and collating sacred history with profane. It was therefore exceedingly convenient for those, who, possessing no sufficient leisure or learning for these inquiries, might very reasonably confide in such authority.

24. Usher, like Scaliger and Petavius, had strictly con-  
 formed to the Hebrew chronology in all scriptural  
 dates. But it is well known that the Septuagint  
 version, and also the Samaritan Pentateuch, differ greatly  
 from the Hebrew and from each other; so that the age of the  
 world has nearly 2,000 years more antiquity in the Greek  
 than in the original text. Jerome had followed the latter in  
 the Vulgate; and, in the seventeenth century, it was usual to  
 maintain the incorrupt purity of the Hebrew manuscripts, so  
 that when Pezron, in his *Antiquité des Temps dévoilée*, 1687,  
 attempted to establish the Septuagint chronology, it excited a  
 clamor in some of his church, as derogatory to the Vulgate  
 translation. Martianay defended the received chronology,  
 and the system of Pezron gained little favor in that age.<sup>1</sup> It  
 has since become more popular, chiefly perhaps on account  
 of the greater latitude it gives to speculations on the origin of  
 kingdoms and other events of the early world, which are cer-  
 tainly somewhat cramped in the common reckoning. But the  
 Septuagint chronology is not free from its own difficulties, and  
 the internal evidence seems rather against its having been the  
 original. Where two must be wrong, it is possible that all  
 three may be so; and the most judicious inquirers into ancient  
 history have of late been coming to the opinion, that, with  
 certain exceptions, there are no means of establishing an  
 entire accuracy in dates before the Olympiads. While much  
 of the more ancient history itself, even in leading and impor-  
 tant events, is so precarious as must be acknowledged, there  
 can be little confidence in chronological schemes. They seem,

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Univ., arts. "Pezron and Martianay;" Bibliothèque Univ., xxiv. 102.

however, to be very seducing, so that those who enter upon the subject as sceptics become believers in their own theory.

25. Among those who addressed their attention to particular portions of chronology, Sir John Marsham ought to be mentioned. In his *Canon Chronicus Ægyptiacus*, he attempted, as the learned were still more prone than they are now, to reconcile conflicting authorities without rejecting any. He is said to have first started the ingenious idea, that the Egyptian dynasties, stretching to such immense antiquity, were not successive, but collateral.<sup>1</sup> Marsham fell, like many others after him, into the unfortunate mistake of confounding Sesostris with Sesac. But, in times when discoveries that Marsham could not have anticipated were yet at a distance, he is extolled by most of those who had labored, by help of the Greek and Hebrew writers alone, to fix ancient history on a stable foundation, as the restorer of the Egyptian annals.

<sup>1</sup> *Biogr. Britannica.*

## CHAPTER II.

## HISTORY OF THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE FROM 1650 TO 1700.

## SECTION I.

**Papal Power limited by the Gallican Church — Dupin — Fleury — Protestant Controversy — Bossuet — His Assaults on Protestantism — Jansenism — Progress of Arminianism in England — Trinitarian Controversy — Defences of Christianity — Pascal's Thoughts — Toleration — Boyle — Locke — French Sermons — And English — Other Theological Works.**

**Decline of Papal Influence.** 1. It has been observed in the last volume, that, while little or no decline could be perceived in the general Church of Rome at the conclusion of that period which we then had before us, yet the Papal authority itself had lost a part of that formidable character, which, through the Jesuits and especially Bellarmin, it had some years before assumed. This was now still more decidedly manifest: the temporal power over kings was not, certainly, renounced, for Rome never retracts any thing; nor was it perhaps without Italian Jesuits to write in its behalf: but the common consent of nations rejected it so strenuously, that on no occasion has it been brought forward by any accredited or eminent advocate. There was also a growing disposition to control the court of Rome: the treaty of Westphalia was concluded in utter disregard of her protest. But such matters of history do not belong to us, when they do not bear a close relation to the warfare of the pen. Some events there were which have had a remarkable influence on the theological literature of France, and indirectly of the rest of Europe.

**Dispute of Louis XIV. with Innocent XI.** 2. Louis XIV., more arrogant, in his earlier life, than bigoted, became involved in a contest with Innocent XI., by a piece of his usual despotism and contempt of his subjects' rights. He extended in 1673 the ancient prerogative, called the regale, by which

the king enjoyed the revenues of vacant bishoprics, to all the kingdom, though many sees had been legally exempt from it. Two bishops appealed to the pope, who interfered in their favor more peremptorily than the times would permit. Innocent, it is but just to say, was maintaining the fair rights of the church, rather than any claim of his own. But the dispute took at length a different form. France was rich in prelates of eminent worth; and among such, as is evident, the Cisalpine theories had never lain wholly dormant since the Councils of Constance and Basle. Louis convened the famous assembly of the Gallican clergy in 1682. Bossuet, who is said to have felt some apprehensions lest the spirit of resistance should become one of rebellion, was appointed to open this assembly; and his sermon on that occasion is among his most splendid works. His posture was indeed magnificent; he stands forward not so much the minister of religion as her arbitrator; we see him poise in his hands earth and heaven, and draw that boundary line which neither was to transgress; he speaks the language of reverential love towards the mother-church, that of St. Peter, and the fairest of her daughters to which he belongs, conciliating their transient feud: yet, in this majestic tone which he assumes, no arrogance betrays itself, no thought of himself as one endowed with transcendent influence; he speaks for his church, and yet we feel that he raises himself above those for whom he speaks.<sup>1</sup>

3. Bossuet was finally intrusted with drawing up the four articles, which the assembly, rather at the instigation perhaps of Colbert than of its own accord, promulgated as the Gallican Creed on the limitations of Papal authority. These declare, 1. That kings are subject to no ecclesiastical power in temporals, nor can be deposed directly or indirectly by the chiefs of the church; 2. That the decrees of the Council of Constance as to the Papal authority are in full force, and ought to be observed; 3. That this authority can only be exerted in conformity with the canons received in the Gallican Church; 4. That though the pope has the principal share in determining controversies of faith, and his decrees extend to all churches, they are not absolutely final, unless the consent of the Catholic Church be super-added. It appears that some bishops would have willingly used stronger language; but Bossuet foresaw the risk of an

<sup>1</sup> This sermon will be found in *Œuvres de Bossuet*, vol. ix.

absolute schism. Even thus the Gallican Church approached so nearly to it, that, the pope refusing the usual bulls to bishops nominated by the king according to the concordat, between thirty and forty sees at last were left vacant. No reconciliation was effected till 1693, in the pontificate of Innocent XII. It is to be observed, whether the French writers slur this over or not, that the pope gained the honors of war; the bishops, who had sat in the assembly of 1682, writing separately letters which have the appearance of regretting, if not retracting, what they had done. These were, however, worded with intentional equivocation; and, as the court of Rome yields to none in suspecting the subterfuges of words, it is plain that it contented itself with an exterior humiliation of its adversaries. The old question of the regale was tacitly settled; Louis enjoyed all that he had desired; and Rome might justly think herself not bound to fight for the privileges of those who had made her so bad a return.<sup>1</sup>

4. The doctrine of the four articles gained ground perhaps in the Church of France through a work of great boldness, and deriving authority from the learning and judgment of its author, Dupin. In the height of the contest, while many were considering how far the Gallican Church might dispense with the institution of bishops at Rome, that point in the established system which evidently secured the victory to their antagonist, in the year 1686, he published a treatise on the ancient discipline of the church. It is written in Latin, which he probably chose as less obnoxious than his own language. It may be true, which I cannot affirm or deny, that each position in this work had been advanced before; but the general tone seems undoubtedly more adverse to the Papal supremacy than any book which could have come from a man of reputed orthodoxy. It tends, notwithstanding a few necessary admissions, to represent almost all that can be called power or jurisdiction in the see of Rome as acquired, if not abusive, and would leave, in a practical sense, no real pope at all; mere primacy being a trifle, and even the right of interfering by admonition being of no great value, when there was no definite obligation to obey. The principle of Dupin is, that, the church having

<sup>1</sup> I have derived most of this account from Bausset's *Life of Bossuet*, vol. ii. Both the bishop and his biographer shuffle a good deal about the letter of the Gallican

prelates in 1693. But, when the Roman legions had passed under the yoke at the Caudine Forks, they were ready to take up arms again.



reached her perfection in the fourth century, we should endeavor, as far as circumstances will admit, to restore the discipline of that age. But, even in the Gallican Church, it has generally been held that he has urged his argument farther than is consistent with a necessary subordination to Rome.<sup>1</sup>

5. In the same year, Dupin published the first volume of a more celebrated work, his *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques*, a complete history of theological literature, at least within the limits of the church, which, in a long series of volumes, he finally brought down to the close of the seventeenth century. It is unquestionably the most standard work of that kind extant, whatever deficiencies may have been found in its execution. The immense erudition requisite for such an undertaking must have rendered it inevitable to take some things at second hand, or to fall into some errors; and we may add other causes less necessary, — the youth of the writer in the first volumes, and the rapidity with which they appeared. Integrity, love of truth, and moderation, distinguish this ecclesiastical history, perhaps beyond any other. Dupin is often near the frontier of orthodoxy; but he is careful, even in the eyes of jealous Catholics, not quite to overstep it. This work was soon translated into English, and furnished a large part of such knowledge on the subject as our own divines possessed. His free way of speaking, however, on the Roman supremacy and some other points, excited the animadversion of more rigid persons, and among others of Bossuet, who stood on his own vantage-ground, ready to strike on every side. The most impartial critics have been of Dupin's mind; but Bossuet, like all dogmatic champions of orthodoxy, never sought truth by an analytical process of investigation, assuming his own possession of it as an axiom in the controversy.<sup>2</sup>

Dupin's Ecclesiastical Library.

6. Dupin was followed a few years afterwards by one not his superior in learning and candor (though deficient in neither), but in skill of narration and beauty of style, — Claude

<sup>1</sup> *Bibliothèque Universelle*, vi. 109. The book is very clear, concise, and learned, so that it is worth reading through by those who would understand such matters. I have not observed that it is much quoted by English writers.

<sup>2</sup> *Bibliothèque Universelle*, iii. 83, vii. 286, xxi. 120; *Biogr. Universelle*: Œuvres

de Bossuet, vol. xxx. Dupin seems not to have held the superiority of bishops to priests *jure divino*, which provokes the prelate of Meaux. "Ces grands critiques sont peu favorables aux supériorités ecclésiastiques, et n'aiment guère plus ces évêques que celle du pape." — p. 491

**Fleury.** The first volume of his Ecclesiastical History came forth in 1691; but a part only of the long series falls within this century. The learning of Fleury has been said to be frequently not original, and his prolixity to be too great for an elementary historian. The former is only blamable when he has concealed his immediate authorities; few works of great magnitude have been written wholly from the prime sources; with regard to his diffuseness, it is very convenient to those who want access to the original writers, or leisure to collate them. Fleury has been called by some, credulous and uncritical; but he is esteemed faithful, moderate, and more respectful or cautious than Dupin. Yet many of his volumes are a continual protest against the vices and ambition of the mediæval popes; and his Ecclesiastical History must be reckoned among the causes of that estrangement, in spirit and affection, from the court of Rome, which leavens the theological literature of France in the eighteenth century.

7. The Dissertations of Fleury, interspersed with his History, were more generally read and more conspicuously excellent. Concise, but neither dry nor superficial; luminous, yet appearing simple; philosophical without the affectation of profundity, seizing all that is most essential in their subject without the tediousness of detail or the pedantry of quotation; written, above all, with that clearness, that ease, that unaffected purity of taste, which belong to the French style of that best age,—they present a contrast not only to the inferior writings on philosophical history with which our age abounds, but, in some respects, even to the best. It cannot be a crime that these Dissertations contain a good deal, which, after more than a century's labor in historical inquiry, has become more familiar than it was.

8. The French Protestants, notwithstanding their disarmed condition, were not, I apprehend, much oppressed under Richelieu and Mazarin. But, soon afterwards, an eagerness to accelerate what was taking place through natural causes, their return into the church, brought on a series of harassing edicts, which ended in the revocation of that of Nantes. During this time they were assailed by less terrible weapons, yet such as required no ordinary strength to resist, the polemical writings of the three greatest men in the church of France,—Nicole, Arnauld, and Bossuet.

Fleury's  
Ecclesiastical  
History.

His Dis-  
sertations.

Protestant  
controversy  
in France.

The two former were desirous to efface the reproaches of an approximation to Calvinism, and of a disobedience to the Catholic Church, under which their Jansenist party was laboring. Nicole began with a small treatise, entitled *La Perpétuité de la Foi de l'Eglise Catholique* touchant l'Eucharistie, in 1664. This aimed to prove that the tenet of transubstantiation had been constant in the church. Claude, the most able controvertist among the French Protestants, replied in the next year. This led to a much more considerable work by Nicole and Arnauld conjointly, with the same title as the former; nor was Claude slow in combating his double-headed adversary. Nicole is said to have written the greater portion of this second treatise, though it commonly bears the name of his more illustrious colleague.<sup>1</sup>

9. Both Arnauld and Nicole were eclipsed by the most distinguished and successful advocate of the Catholic Church, Bossuet. His *Exposition de la Foi Catholique* was written in 1668, for the use of two brothers of the Dangeau family; but having been communicated to Turenne, the most eminent Protestant that remained in France, it contributed much to his conversion. It was published in 1671; and, though enlarged from the first sketch, does not exceed eighty pages in octavo. Nothing can be more precise, more clear, or more free from all circuitry and detail, than this little book; every thing is put in the most specious light; the authority of the ancient church, recognized, at least nominally, by the majority of Protestants, is alone kept in sight. Bossuet limits himself to doctrines established by the Council of Trent, leaving out of the discussion not only all questionable points, but, what is perhaps less fair, all rites and usages, however general, or sanctioned by the regular discipline of the church, except so far as formally approved by that council. Hence he glides with a transient step over the invocation of saints and the worship of images, but presses with his usual dexterity on the inconsistencies and weak concessions of his antagonists. The Calvinists, or some of them, had employed a jargon of words about real presence, which he exposes with admirable brevity and vigor.<sup>2</sup> Nor does he gain

Bossuet's  
Exposition  
of Catholic  
Faith.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* Univ.

<sup>2</sup> Bossuet observes, that most other controversies are found to depend more on words than substance, and the difference becomes less the more they are examined;

but, in that of the Eucharist, the contrary is the case, since the Calvinists endeavor to accommodate their phraseology to the Catholics, while essentially they differ. Vol. xviii. p. 126.

less advantage in favor of tradition and church authority from the assumption of somewhat similar claims by the same party. It has often been alleged, that the exposition of Bossuet was not well received by many on his own side. And for this there seems to be some foundation, though the Protestant controvertists have made too much of the facts. It was published at Rome in 1678, and approved in the most formal manner by Innocent XI. the next year. But it must have been perceived to separate the faith of the church, as it rested on dry propositions, from the same faith living and embodied in the every-day worship of the people.<sup>1</sup>

10. Bossuet was now the acknowledged champion of the Roman Church in France: Claude was in equal pre-eminence on the other side. These great adversaries had a regular conference in 1678. Mademoiselle de Duras, a Protestant lady, like most others of her rank at that time, was wavering about religion; and in her presence the dispute was carried on. It entirely turned on church authority. The arguments of Bossuet differ only from those which have often been adduced, by the spirit and conciseness with which he presses them. We have his own account, which of course gives himself the victory. It was almost as much of course that the lady was converted; for it is seldom that a woman can withstand the popular argument on that side, when she has once gone far enough to admit the possibility of its truth, by giving it a hearing. Yet Bossuet deals in sophisms, which, though always in the mouths of those who call themselves orthodox, are contemptible to such as know facts as well as logic. "I urged," he says, "in a few words, what presumption it was to believe that we can better understand the word of God than all the rest of the church, and that nothing would thus prevent there being as many religions as persons."<sup>2</sup> But there can be no presumption in supposing, that we may understand any thing better than one who has never examined it at all: and if this rest of the church, so magnificently brought forward, have commonly acted on Bossuet's principle, and thought it presumptuous to judge

<sup>1</sup> The writings of Bossuet against the Protestants occupy nine volumes, xviii.-xxvi., in the great edition of his works, Versailles, 1816. The *Exposition de la Foi* is in the eighteenth. Bausset, in his *Life of Bossuet*, appears to have refuted

the exaggerations of many Protestants as to the ill reception of this little book at Rome. Yet there was a certain foundation for them. See *Bibliothèque Universelle*, vol. xi. p. 455.

<sup>2</sup> *Œuvres de Bossuet*, xliii. 290.

for themselves; if, out of many millions of persons, a few only have deliberately reasoned on religion, and the rest have been, like true zeros, nothing in themselves, but much in sequence; if also, as is most frequently the case, this presumptuousness is not the assertion of a paradox or novelty, but the preference of one denomination of Christians, or of one tenet maintained by respectable authority, to another, — we can only scorn the emptiness, as well as resent the effrontery, of this commonplace that rings so often in our ears. Certainly reason is so far from condemning a deference to the judgment of the wise and good, that nothing is more irrational than to neglect it; but when this is claimed for those whom we need not believe to have been wiser and better than ourselves, nay, sometimes whom without vain-glory we may esteem less, and that so as to set aside the real authority of the most philosophical, unbiassed, and judicious of mankind, it is not pride or presumption, but a sober use of our faculties, that rejects the jurisdiction.

11. Bossuet once more engaged in a similar discussion about 1691. Among the German Lutherans, there seems to have been for a long time a lurking notion, correspondence with Molanus and Leibniz. that, on some terms or other, a reconciliation with the Church of Rome could be effected; and this was most countenanced in the dominions of Brunswick, and above all in the University of Helmstadt. Leibnitz himself, and Molanus, a Lutheran divine, were the negotiators on that side with Bossuet. Their treaty, for such it was apparently understood to be, was conducted by writing; and, when we read their papers on both sides, nothing is more remarkable than the tone of superiority which the Catholic plenipotentiary, if such he could be deemed without powers from any one but himself, has thought fit to assume. No concession is offered, no tenet explained away; the sacramental cup to the laity, and a permission to the Lutheran clergy already married to retain their wives after their re-ordination, is all that he holds forth; and in this, doubtless, he had no authority from Rome. Bossuet could not veil his haughty countenance; and his language is that of asperity and contemptuousness, instead of moderation. He dictates terms of surrender as to a besieged city when the breach is already practicable, and hardly deigns to show his clemency by granting the smallest favor to the garrison. It is curious to see the strained con-



structions, the artifices of silence, to which Molanus has recourse, in order to make out some pretence for his ignominious surrender. Leibnitz, with whom the correspondence broke off in 1693, and was renewed again in 1699, seems not quite so yielding as the other; and the last biographer of Bossuet suspects, that the German philosopher was insincere or tortuous in the negotiation. If this were so, he must have entered upon it less of his own accord than to satisfy the Princess Sophia, who, like many of her family, had been a little wavering, till our Act of Settlement became a true settlement to their faith. This bias of the court of Hanover is intimated in several passages. The success of this treaty of union, or rather of subjection, was as little to be expected as it was desirable: the old spirit of Lutheranism was much worn out, but there must surely have been a determination to resist so unequal a compromise. Rome negotiated as a conqueror with these beaten Carthaginians; yet no one had beaten them but themselves.<sup>1</sup>

12. The warfare of the Roman Church may be carried on

*The Variations of Protestant Churches.*

either in a series of conflicts on the various doctrines wherein the reformers separated from her, or by one pitched battle on the main question of a conclusive authority somewhere in the church. Bossuet's temper, as well as his inferiority in original learning, led him in preference to the latter scheme of theological strategy. It was also manifestly that course of argument which was most likely to persuade the unlearned. He followed up the blow which he had already struck against Claude in his famous work on the Variations of Protestant Churches. Never did his genius find a subject more fit to display its characteristic impetuosity, its arrogance, or its cutting and merciless spirit of sarcasm. The weaknesses, the inconsistent evasions, the extravagances of Luther, Zwingle, Calvin, and Beza, pass, one after another, before us, till these great reformers seem, like victim-prisoners, to be hewn down by the indignant prophet. That Bossuet is candid in statement, or even faithful in quotation, I should much doubt: he gives the words of his adversaries in his own French; and the references are not made to any specified edition of their voluminous writings. The main point, as he contends it to be, that the Protestant churches (for he does not confine this to persons) fluctuated

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres de Bossuet*, vols. xxv. and xxvi.

much in the sixteenth century, is sufficiently proved; but it remained to show that this was a reproach. Those who have taken a different view from Bossuet may perhaps think that a little more of this censure would have been well incurred; that they have varied too little, rather than too much; and that it is far more difficult, even in controversy with the Church of Rome, to withstand the inference which their long creeds and confessions, as well as the language too common with their theologians, have furnished to her more ancient and catholic claim of infallibility, than to vindicate those successive variations which are analogous to the necessary course of human reason on all other subjects. The essential fallacy of Romanism, that truth must ever exist visibly on earth, is implied in the whole strain of Bossuet's attack on the variances of Protestantism: it is evident that variance of opinion proves error somewhere; but, unless it can be shown that we have any certain method of excluding it, this should only lead us to be more indulgent towards the judgment of others, and less confident of our own. The notion of an intrinsic moral criminality in religious error is at the root of the whole argument; and, till Protestants are well rid of this, there seems no secure mode of withstanding the effect which the vast weight of authority asserted by the Latin Church, even where it has not the aid of the Eastern, must produce on timid and scrupulous minds.

13. In no period has the Anglican Church stood up so powerfully in defence of the Protestant cause as in that before us. From the era of the Restoration to the close of the century, the war was unremitting and vigorous. And it is particularly to be remarked, that the principal champions of the Church of England threw off that ambiguous syncretism which had displayed itself under the first Stuarts, and, comparatively at least with their immediate predecessors, avoided every admission which might facilitate a deceitful compromise. We can only mention a few of the writers who signalized themselves in this controversy.

Anglican  
writings  
against  
Popery.

14. Taylor's Dissuasive from Popery was published in 1664; and, in this his latest work, we find the same general strain of Protestant reasoning, the same rejection of all but scriptural authority, the same free exposure of the inconsistencies and fallacies of tradition, the same ten-

Taylor's  
Dissuasive.

dency to excite a sceptical feeling as to all except the primary doctrines of religion, which had characterized the Liberty of Prophesying. These are mixed, indeed, in Taylor's manner, with a few passages (they are, I think, but few), which, singly taken, might seem to breathe not quite this spirit; but the tide flows for the most part the same way, and it is evident that his mind had undergone no change. The learning in all his writings is profuse; but Taylor never leaves me with the impression that he is exact and scrupulous in its application. In one part of this Dissuasive from Popery, having been reproached with some inconsistency, he has no scruple to avow, that, in a former work, he had employed weak arguments for a laudable purpose.<sup>1</sup>

15. Barrow, not so extensively learned as Taylor, who had read rather too much, but inferior perhaps even in that respect to hardly any one else, and above him in closeness and strength of reasoning, maintained the combat against Rome in many of his sermons, and especially in a long treatise on the Papal supremacy. Stillingfleet followed, a man deeply versed in ecclesiastical antiquity, of an argumentative mind, excellently fitted for polemical dispute, but perhaps by those habits of his life rendered too much of an advocate to satisfy an impartial reader. In the critical reign of James II., he may be considered as the leader on the Protestant side; but Wake, Tillotson, and several more, would deserve mention in a fuller history of ecclesiastical literature.

16. The controversies always smouldering in the Church of Rome, and sometimes breaking into flame, to which the Anti-Pelagian writings of Augustin had originally given birth, have been slightly touched in our former volumes. It has been seen, that the rigidly predestinarian theories had been condemned by the court of Rome in Baius; that the opposite doctrine of Molina had narrowly escaped censure; that it was safest to abstain from any language not verbally that of the church or of Augustin, whom the church held incontrovertible. But now a more serious and celebrated controversy, that of the Jansenists, pierced as it were to the heart of the church. It arose before the middle of the century. Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres, in his *Augustinus*, pub-

<sup>1</sup> Taylor's Works, i. 304. This is not surprising, as in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, xl. 484, he maintains the right of using arguments and authorities in controversy which we do not believe to be valid.

lished after his death in 1640, gave, as he professed, a faithful statement of the tenets of that father. "We do not inquire," he says, "what men ought to believe on the powers of human nature, or on the grace and predestination of God, but what Augustin once preached with the approbation of the church, and has consigned to writing in many of his works." This book is in three parts: the first containing a history of the Pelagian controversy; the second and third, an exposition of the tenets of Augustin. Jansenius does not, however, confine himself so much to mere analysis, but that he attacks the Jesuits Lessius and Molina, and even reflects on the bull of Pius V. condemning Baius, which he cannot wholly approve.<sup>1</sup>

17. Richelieu, who is said to have retained some animosity against Jansenius on account of a book called *Mars Gallicus*, which he had written on the side of his sovereign the king of Spain, designed to obtain the condemnation of the *Augustinus* by the French

Condemnation of his *Augustinus* in France,

clergy. The Jesuits, therefore, had gained ground so far, that the doctrines of Augustin were out of fashion, though few besides themselves ventured to reject his nominal authority. It is certainly clear, that Jansenius offended the greater part of the church; but he had some powerful advocates, and especially Antony Arnauld, the most renowned of a family long conspicuous for eloquence, for piety, and for opposition to the Jesuits. In 1649, after several years of obscure dispute, Cornet, syndic of the faculty of theology in the University of Paris, brought forward for censure seven propositions, five of which became afterwards so famous, without saying that they were found in the work of Jansenius. The faculty condemned them, though it had never been reckoned favorable to the Jesuits; a presumption that they were at least expressed in a manner repugnant to the prevalent doctrine. Yet Le Clerc declares his own opinion, that there may be some ambiguity in the style of the first, but that the other four are decidedly conformable to the theology of Augustin.

<sup>1</sup> A very copious history of Jansenism, taking it up from the Council of Trent, will be found in the fourteenth volume of the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, pp. 139-398, from which Mosheim has derived most of what we read in his *Ecclesiastical History*. And the History of Port Royal was written by Racine in so perspicuous and neat a style, that though we may hardly think, with Orivet, that it places him as high in prose-writing as his tragedies do in verse,

it entitles him to rank in the list of those who have succeeded in both. Is it not probable, that in some scenes of *Athalie* he had Port Royal before his eyes? The history and the tragedy were written about the same time. Racine, it is rather remarkable, had entered the field against Nicole in 1655, chiefly indeed to defend theatrical representations, but not without many sarcasms against Jansenism.



18. The Jesuits now took the course of calling in the authority of Rome. They pressed Innocent X. to condemn the five propositions, which were maintained by some doctors in France. It is not the policy of that court to compromise so delicate a possession as infallibility by bringing it to the test of that personal judgment, which is of necessity the arbiter of each man's own obedience. The popes have, in fact, rarely taken a part, independently of councils, in these school-debates. The bull of Pius V. (a man too zealous by character to regard prudence), in which he condemned many tenets of Baius, had not, nor could it give satisfaction to those who saw with their own eyes that it swerved from the Augustinian theory. Innocent was, at first, unwilling to meddle with a subject which, as he owned to a friend, he did not understand. But, after hearing some discussions, he grew more confident of his knowledge, which he ascribed, as in duty bound, to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and went so heartily along with the Anti-Jansenists, that he refused to hear the deputies of the other party. On the 31st of May, 1653, he condemned the five propositions, four as erroneous, and the fifth in stronger language; declaring, however, not in the bull, but orally, that he did not condemn the tenet of efficacious grace (which all the Dominicans held), nor the doctrine of St. Augustin, which was, and ever would be, that of the church.

19. The Jansenists were not bold enough to hint that they did not acknowledge the infallibility of the pope in an express and positive declaration. Even if they had done so, they had an evident recognition of this censure of the five propositions by their own church, and might dread its being so generally received as to give the sanction which no Catholic can withstand. They had recourse, unfortunately, to a subterfuge which put them in the wrong. They admitted that the propositions were false, but denied that they could be found in the book of Jansenius. Thus each party rested on the denial of a matter of fact, and each erroneously, according at least to the judgment of the most learned and impartial Protestants. The five propositions express the doctrine of Augustin himself; and, if they do this, we can hardly doubt that they express that of Jansenius. In a short time, this ground of evasion was taken from their party. An assembly of French prelates in the

The Jansenists take a distinction,



first place, and afterwards Alexander VII, successor of Innocent X., condemned the propositions as in Jansenius, and in the sense intended by Jansenius.

20. The Jansenists were now driven to the wall: the Sorbonne in 1655, in consequence of some propositions of Arnauld, expelled him from the theological faculty; a formulary was drawn up to be signed by the clergy, condemning the propositions of Jansenius, which was finally established in 1661; and those who refused, even nuns, underwent a harassing persecution. The most striking instance of this, which still retains an historical character, was the dissolution of the famous convent of Port-Royal, over which Angelica Arnauld, sister of the great advocate of Jansenism, had long presided with signal reputation. This nunnery was at Paris, having been removed in 1644 from an ancient Cistercian convent of the same name, about six leagues distant, and called, for distinction, Port-Royal des Champs. To this now unfrequented building some of the most eminent men repaired for study, whose writings being anonymously published have been usually known by the name of their residence. Arnauld, Pascal, Nicole, Lancelot, De Sacy, are among the Messieurs de Port-Royal, an appellation so glorious in the seventeenth century. The Jansenists now took a distinction very reasonable, as it seems, in its nature, between the authority which asserts or denies a proposition, and that which does the like as to a fact. They refused to the pope, that is, in this instance, to the church, the latter infallibility. We can not prosecute this part of ecclesiastical history farther: if writings of any literary importance had been produced by the controversy, they would demand our attention; but this does not appear to have been the case. The controversy between Arnauld and Malebranche may perhaps be an exception. The latter, carried forward by his original genius, attempted to deal with the doctrines of theology as with metaphysical problems, in his *Traité de la Nature et de la Grâce*. Arnauld animadverted on this in his *Réflexions Philosophiques et Théologiques*. Malebranche replied in *Lettres du Père Malebranche à un de ses Amis*. This was published in 1686; and the controversy between such eminent masters of abstruse reasoning began to excite attention. Malebranche seems to have retired first from the field. His antagonist had great advantages in the dispute, according to received systems of

theology, with which he was much more conversant, and perhaps, on the whole, in the philosophical part of the question. This, however, cannot be reckoned entirely a Jansenistic controversy, though it involved those perilous difficulties which had raised that flame.<sup>1</sup>

21. The credit of Augustin was now as much shaken in the Protestant as in the Catholic regions of Europe. Program of  
Arminianism. Episcopius had given to the Remonstrant party a reputation which no sect so inconsiderable in its separate character has ever possessed. The Dutch Arminians were at no time numerous; they took no hold of the people; they had few churches, and, though not persecuted by the now lenient policy of Holland, were still under the ban of an orthodox clergy, as exclusive and bigoted as before. But their writings circulated over Europe, and made a silent impression on the adverse party. It became less usual to bring forward the Augustinian hypothesis in prominent or unequivocal language. Courcelles, born at Geneva, and the successor of Episcopius in the Remonstrant congregation at Amsterdam, with less genius than his predecessor, had perhaps a more extensive knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquity. His works were much in esteem with the theologians of that way of thinking; but they have not fallen in my way.

Courcelles. 22. Limborch, great-nephew of Episcopius, seems, more than any other Arminian divine, to have inherited his Limborch. mantle. His most important work is the *Theologia Christiana*, containing a system of divinity and morals, in seven books and more than 900 pages, published in 1686. It is the fullest delineation of the Arminian scheme; but as the Arminians were by their principle free inquirers, and not, like other churches, bondsmen of symbolical formularies, no one book can strictly be taken as their representative. The tenets of Limborch are, in the majority of disputable points, such as impartial men have generally found in the primitive or Antient fathers; but in some he probably deviates from them, steering far away from all that the Protestants of the Swiss reform had abandoned as superstitious or unintelligible.

23. John Le Clerc, in the same relationship to Courcelles that Limborch was to Episcopius, and like him transplanted from Geneva to the more liberal air, at that time, of the United

<sup>1</sup> An account of this controversy will be found at length in the second volume of the *Bibliothèque Universelle*.

Provinces, claims a high place among the Dutch Arminians; for, though he did not maintain their cause either in systematic or polemical writings, his commentary on the Old Testament, and still more his excellent and celebrated reviews, the *Bibliothèques Universelle*, *Choisie*, and *Ancienne et Moderne*, must be reckoned a perpetual combat on that side. These journals enjoyed an extraordinary influence over Europe, and deserved to enjoy it. Le Clerc is generally temperate, judicious, appeals to no passion, displays a very extensive though not perhaps a very deep erudition, lies in wait for the weakness and temerity of those he reviews; thus sometimes gaining the advantage over more learned men than himself. He would have been a perfect master of that sort of criticism, then newly current in literature, if he could have repressed an irritability in matters personal to himself, and a degree of prejudice against the Romish writers, or perhaps those styled orthodox in general, which sometimes disturbs the phlegmatic steadiness with which a good reviewer, like a practised sportsman, brings down his game.<sup>1</sup>

24. The most remarkable progress made by the Arminian theology was in England. This had begun under James and Charles; but it was then taken up in conjunction with that patristic learning which adopted the fourth and fifth centuries as the standard of orthodox faith. Perhaps the first very bold and unambiguous attack on

Le Clerc

Sancroft's  
Far Pre-  
destination.

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Monk observes, that Le Clerc "seems to have been the first person who understood the power which may be exercised over literature by a reviewer."—*Life of Bentley*, p. 20. This may be true, especially as he was nearly the first reviewer, and certainly better than his predecessors. But this remark is followed by a sarcastic animadversion upon Le Clerc's ignorance of Greek metres, and by the severe assertion, that, "by an absolute system of terror, he made himself a despot in the republic of letters."

[The former is certainly just: Le Clerc was not comparable to Bentley, or to many who have followed, in his critical knowledge of Greek metres; which, at the present day, would be held very cheap. He is, however, to be judged relatively to his predecessors; and, in the particular department of metrical rules, few had known much more than he did; as we may perceive by the Greek compositions of Casaubon and other eminent scholars. Le Clerc might have been more prudent in abstaining from interference with what

he did not well understand; but this cannot warrant scornful language towards so general a scholar, and one who served literature so well. That he made himself a despot in the republic of letters by a system of terror is a charge not made out, as it seems to me, by the general character of Le Clerc's criticisms, which, where he has no personal quarrel, is temperate and moderate, neither traducing men nor imputing motives. I adhere to the character of his reviews given in the text: and having early in life become acquainted with them, and having been accustomed, by books then esteemed, to think highly of Le Clerc, I must be excused from following a change of fashion. This note has been modified on the complaint of the learned prelate quoted in it, whom I had not the slightest intention of offending, but who might take some expressions, with respect to periodical criticism, as personal to himself; which neither were so meant, nor, as far as I know, could apply to any reputed writings of his composition—

the Calvinistic system which we shall mention came from this quarter. This was in an anonymous Latin pamphlet entitled *Fur Prædestinatus*, published in 1651, and generally ascribed to Sancroft, at that time a young man. It is a dialogue between a thief under sentence of death and his attendant minister, wherein the former insists upon his assurance of being predestinated to salvation. In this idea there is nothing but what is sufficiently obvious; but the dialogue is conducted with some spirit and vivacity. Every position in the thief's mouth is taken from eminent Calvinistic writers; and what is chiefly worth notice is, that Sancroft, for the first time, has ventured to arraign the greatest heroes of the Reformation; not only Calvin, Beza, and Zanchius, but, who had been hitherto spared, Luther and Zwingli. It was in the nature of a manifesto from the Arminian party, that they would not defer in future to any modern authority.<sup>1</sup>

25. The loyal Anglican clergy, suffering persecution at the hands of Calvinistic sectaries, might be naturally expected to cherish the opposite principles. These are manifest in the sermons of Barrow, rather perhaps by his silence than his tone, and more explicitly in those of South. But many exceptions might be found among leading men, such as Sanderson; while in an opposite quarter, among the younger generation who had conformed to the times, arose a more formidable spirit of Arminianism, which changed the face of the English Church. This was displayed among those who, just about the epoch of the Restoration, were denominated Latitude-men, or more commonly Latitudinarians, trained in the principles of Episcopius and Chillingworth; strongly averse to every compromise with Popery, and thus distinguished from the high-church party; learned rather in profane philosophy than in the fathers; more full of Plato and Plotinus than Jerome or Chrysostom; great maintainers of natural religion, and of the eternal laws of morality; not very solicitous about systems of orthodoxy, and limiting very considerably beyond the notions of former ages the fundamental

<sup>1</sup> The *Fur Prædestinatus* is reprinted in D'Oyly's *Life of Sancroft*. It is much the best proof of ability that the worthy archbishop ever gave.

[The superiority of this little piece to any thing else ascribed to Sancroft is easily explained. It was not his own; of which his biographers have been ignorant. Leib-

nitz informs us that it is a translation from a Dutch tract, published at the beginning of the Arminian controversy. Bayle, he says, was not aware of this, and quotes it as written in English. *Thesaurus*, sect. 167. Sancroft, as appears by D'Oyly's *Life* of him, was in Holland from 1667 to 1669. — 1828.]

tenets of Christianity. This is given as a general character, but varying in the degree of its application to particular persons. Burnet enumerates as the chief of this body of men, More, Cudworth, Whichcot, Tillotson, Stillingfleet; some, especially the last, more tenacious of the authority of the fathers and of the church than others, but all concurring in the adoption of an Arminian theology.<sup>1</sup> This became so predominant before the Revolution, that few English divines of eminence remained who so much as endeavored to steer a middle course, or to dissemble their renunciation of the doctrines which had been sanctioned at the Synod of Dort by the delegates of their church. "The Theological Institutions of Episcopius," says a contemporary writer, "were at that time (1685) generally in the hands of our students of divinity in both universities, as the best system of divinity that had appeared."<sup>2</sup> And he proceeds afterwards: "The Remonstrant writers, among whom there were men of excellent learning and parts, had now acquired a considerable reputation in our universities by the means of some great men among us." This testimony seems irresistible; and as, one hundred years before, the Institutes of Calvin were read in the same academical studies, we must own, unless Calvin and Episcopius shall be maintained to have held the same tenets, that Bossuet might have added a chapter to the Variations of Protestant Churches.

26. The methods adopted in order to subvert the Augustinian theology were sometimes direct, by explicit controversy, or by an opposite train of scriptural interpretation in regular commentaries; more frequently perhaps indirect, by inculcating moral duties, and especially by magnifying the law of nature. Among the first class, the *Harmonia Apostolica* of Bull seems to be reckoned the principal work of this period. It was published in 1669, and was fiercely encountered at first not merely by the Presbyterian party, but by many of the church; the Lutheran tenets as to justification by faith being still deemed orthodox. Bull establishes as the groundwork of his harmony between the apostles Paul and James, on a subject where their language apparently clashes in terms, that we are to interpret

Bull's  
*Harmonia  
Apostolica.*

<sup>1</sup> Burnet's *History of His Own Times*, i. 187; Account of the new Sect called *Latitudinarians*, in the collection of tracts entitled *The Phoenix*, vol. ii. p. 499.

<sup>2</sup> Nelson's *Life of Bull*, in *Bull's Works*, vol. viii. p. 257.



St. Paul by St. James, and not St. James by St. Paul; because the latest authority, and that which may be presumed to have explained what was obscure in the former, ought to prevail,<sup>1</sup>—a rule doubtless applicable in many cases, whatever it may be in this. It at least turned to his advantage; but it was not so easy for him to reconcile his opinions with those of the reformers, or with the Anglican articles.

27. The Paraphrase and Annotations of Hammond on the New Testament give a different color to the Epistles of St. Paul from that which they display in the hands of Beza and the other theologians of the sixteenth century; and the name of Hammond stood so high with the Anglican clergy, that he naturally turned the tide of interpretation his own way. The writings of Fowler, Wilkins, and Whichcot, are chiefly intended to exhibit the moral lustre of Christianity, and to magnify the importance of virtuous life. Wilkins left an unfinished work on the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion. Twelve chapters only, about half the volume, were ready for the press at his death: the rest was compiled by Tillotson as well as the materials left by the author would allow; and the expressions employed lead us to believe that much was due to the editor. The latter's preface strongly presses the separate obligation of natural religion, upon which both the disciples of Hobbes, and many of the less learned sectaries, were at issue with him.

28. We do not find much of importance written on the Unitarian controversy before the middle of the seventeenth century, except by the Socinians themselves. But the case was now very different. Though the Polish or rather German Unitarians did not produce more distinguished men than before, they came more forward in the field of dispute. Finally expelled from Poland in 1660, they sought refuge in more learned as well more tolerant regions, and especially in the genial soil of religious liberty,—the United Provinces. Even here they enjoyed no avowed toleration; but the press, with a very slight concealment of place, under the attractive words Eleutheropolis, Irenopolis or Freystadt, was ready to serve them with its natural impartiality. They began to make a slight progress in England; the writings of Biddle were such as even Cromwell, though habitually tolerant, did not overlook; the author underwent an imprisonment

Hammond;  
Locke;  
Wilkins.

Socinians in  
England.

<sup>1</sup> Nelson's Life of Bull.

both at that time and after the Restoration. In general, the Unitarian writers preserved a disguise. Milton's treatise, not long since brought to light, goes on the Arian hypothesis, which had probably been countenanced by some others. It became common, in the reign of Charles II., for the English divines to attack the Anti-Trinitarians of each denomination.

29. An epoch is supposed to have been made in this controversy by the famous work of Bull, *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ*. This was not primarily directed against the heterodox party. In the *Dogmata Theologica* of Petavius, published in 1644, that learned Jesuit, laboriously compiling passages from the fathers, had come to the conclusion, that most of those before the Nicene Council had seemed, by their language, to run into nearly the same heresy as that which the council had condemned; and this inference appeared to rest on a long series of quotations. The Arminian Courcelles, and even the English philosopher Cudworth, the latter of whom was as little suspected of an heterodox leaning as Petavius himself, had arrived at the same result; so that a considerable triumph was given to the Arians, in which the Socinians, perhaps at that time more numerous, seem to have thought themselves entitled to partake. Bull had, therefore, to contend with authorities not to be despised by the learned.

Bull's *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ*.

30. The *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ* was published in 1685. It did not want answerers in England; but it obtained a great reputation; and an assembly of the French clergy, through the influence of Bossuet, returned thanks to the author. It was indeed evident, that Petavius, though he had certainly formed his opinion with perfect honesty, was preparing the way for an inference, that, if the primitive fathers could be heterodox on a point of so great magnitude, we must look for infallibility, not in them nor in the diffusive church, but in general councils presided over by the pope, or ultimately in the pope himself. This, though not unsuitable to the notions of some Jesuits, was diametrically opposite to the principles of the Gallican Church, which professed to repose on a perpetual and catholic tradition.

31. Notwithstanding the popularity of this defence of the Nicene faith, and the learning it displays, the author was far from ending the controversy, or from satisfying all his readers. It was alleged, that he does not meet the question with

which he deals; that the word *hypostasis*, being almost new at the time of the council, and being obscure and metaphysical in itself, required a precise definition to make the reader see his way before him, or, at least, one better than Bull has given, which the adversary might probably adopt without much scruple; that the passages adduced from the fathers are often insufficient for his purpose, that he confounds the eternal essence with the eternal personality or distinctness of the Logos, though well aware, of course, that many of the early writers employed different names (*ἐνδιόθετος* and *προφορικὸς*) for these; and that he does not repel some of the passages which can hardly bear an orthodox interpretation. It was urged, moreover, that his own hypothesis, taken altogether, is but a palliated Arianism; that by insisting, for more than one hundred pages, on the subordination of the Son to the Father, he came close to what since has borne that name, though it might not be precisely what had been condemned at Nice, and could not be reconciled with the Athanasian Creed, except by such an interpretation of the latter as is neither probable, nor has been reputed orthodox.

32. Among the theological writers of the Roman Church, and, in a less degree, among Protestants, there has always been a class, not inconsiderable for numbers or for influence, generally denominated mystics, or, when their language has been more unmeasured, enthusiasts and fanatics. These may be distinguished into two kinds, though it must readily be understood that they may often run much into one another, — the first believing that the soul, by immediate communion with the Deity, receives a peculiar illumination and knowledge of truths not cognizable by the understanding; the second less solicitous about intellectual than moral light, and aiming at such pure contemplation of the attributes of God, and such an intimate perception of spiritual life, as may end in a sort of absorption into the divine essence. But I should not probably have alluded to any writings of this description, if the two most conspicuous luminaries of the French Church, Bossuet and Fenelon, had not clashed with each other in that famous controversy of Quietism, to which the enthusiastic writings of Madame Guyon gave birth. The “*Maximes des Saints*” of Fenelon I have never seen: some editions of his entire works, as

they affect to be, do not include what the church has condemned; and the original book has probably become scarce.<sup>1</sup> Fenelon appears to have been treated by his friend, (shall we call him?) or rival, with remarkable harshness. Bossuet might have felt some jealousy at the rapid elevation of the Archbishop of Cambray: but we need not have recourse to this; the rigor of orthodoxy in a temper like his will account for all. There could be little doubt but that many saints honored by the church had uttered things quite as strong as any that Fenelon's work contained. Bossuet, however, succeeded in obtaining its condemnation at Rome. Fenelon was of the second class above mentioned among the mystics, and seems to have been absolutely free from such pretences to illumination as we find in Behmen or Barclay. The pure, disinterested love of God was the main-spring of his religious theory. The Divine Economy of Poiret, 1686, and the writings of a German Quietist, Spener, do not require any particular mention.<sup>2</sup>

33. This latter period of the seventeenth century was marked by an increasing boldness in religious inquiry: we find more disregard of authority, more disposition to question received tenets, a more suspicious criticism both as to the genuineness and the credibility of ancient writings, a more ardent love of truth, that is, of perceiving and understanding what is truth, instead of presuming that we possess it without any understanding at all. Much of this was associated, no doubt, with the other revolutions in literary opinion; with the philosophy of Bacon, Descartes, Gassendi, Hobbes, Bayle, and Locke; with the spirit which a slightly learned yet acute generation of men rather conversant with the world than with libraries (to whom the appeal in modern languages must be made) was sure to breathe; with that incessant reference to proof which the physical sciences taught mankind to demand. Hence quotations are comparatively rare in the theological writings of this age: they are better reduced to their due office of testimony as to fact, sometimes of illustration or better statement of an argument, but not so much alleged as argument or authority in themselves. Even those who combated on the side of established doctrines were compelled to argue more from themselves, lest the pub-

Change in the character of theological literature.

<sup>1</sup> [It is reprinted in the edition of Fenelon's works, Versailles, 1820.—1847.]

<sup>2</sup> Bibl. Universelle, v. 412, xvi. 224.



lic, their umpire, should reject, with an opposite prejudice, what had enslaved the prejudices of their fathers.

34. It is well known, that a disbelief in Christianity became very frequent about this time. Several books, more or less, appear to indicate this spirit; but the charge has often been made with no sufficient reason. Of *Freedom of many writings.* Hobbes enough has been already said, and Spinoza's place as a metaphysician will be in the next chapter. His *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, published anonymously at Amsterdam, with the false date of Hamburg, in 1670, contains many observations on the Old Testament, which, though they do not really affect its general authenticity and truth, clashed with the commonly received opinion of its absolute inspiration. Some of these remarks were, if not borrowed, at least repeated in a book of more celebrity, *Sentiments de quelques Théologiens d'Hollande sur l'Histoire Critique du Père Simon*. This work is written by Le Clerc; but it has been doubted whether he is the author of those acute but hardy questions on the inspiration of Scripture which it contains. They must, however, be presumed to coincide for the most part with his own opinion; but he has afterwards declared his dissent from the hypothesis contained in these volumes, that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch. The *Archæologia Philosophica* of Thomas Burnet is intended to dispute the literal history of the creation and fall. But few will pretend that either Le Clerc or Burnet were disbelievers in revelation.

35. Among those who sustained the truth of Christianity by argument rather than authority, the first place *Thoughts of Pascal.* both in order of time and of excellence is due to Pascal, though his *Thoughts* were not published till 1670, some years after his death, and, in the first edition, not without suppressions. They have been supposed to be fragments of a more systematic work that he had planned, or perhaps only reflections committed to paper, with no design of publication in their actual form. But, as is generally the case with works of genius, we do not easily persuade ourselves that they could have been improved by any such alteration as would have destroyed their type. They are at present bound together by a real coherence through the predominant character of the reasonings and sentiments, and give us every thing that we could desire in a more regular



treatise without the tedious verbosity which regularity is apt to produce. The style is not so polished as in the Provincial Letters, and the sentences are sometimes ill constructed and elliptical. Passages almost transcribed from Montaigne have been published by careless editors as Pascal's.

36. But the Thoughts of Pascal are to be ranked, as a monument of his genius, above the Provincial Letters, though some have asserted the contrary. They burn with an intense light; condensed in expression, sublime, energetic, rapid, they hurry away the reader till he is scarcely able or willing to distinguish the sophisms from the truth which they contain. For that many of them are incapable of bearing a calm scrutiny is very manifest to those who apply such a test. The notes of Voltaire, though always intended to detract, are sometimes unanswerable; but the splendor of Pascal's eloquence absolutely annihilates, in effect on the general reader, even this antagonist.

37. Pascal had probably not read very largely, which has given an ampler sweep to his genius. Except the Bible and the writings of Augustin, the book that seems most to have attracted him was the Essays of Montaigne. Yet no men could be more unlike in personal dispositions and in the cast of their intellect. But Pascal, though abhorring the religious and moral carelessness of Montaigne, found much that fell in with his own reflections in the contempt of human opinions, the perpetual humbling of human reason, which runs through the bold and original work of his predecessor. He quotes no book so frequently; and indeed, except Epictetus, and once or twice Descartes, he hardly quotes any other at all. Pascal was too acute a geometer, and too sincere a lover of truth, to countenance the sophisms of mere Pyrrhonism; but, like many theological writers, in exalting faith he does not always give reason her value, and furnishes weapons which the sceptic might employ against himself. It has been said that he denies the validity of the proofs of natural religion. This seems to be in some measure an error, founded on mistaking the objections he puts in the mouths of unbelievers for his own. But it must, I think, be admitted that his arguments for the being of a God are too often *à tutiori*, that it is the safer side to take.

38. The Thoughts of Pascal on miracles abound in proofs of his acuteness and originality; an originality much more

striking when we recollect that the subject had not been discussed as it has since, but with an intermixture of some sophistical and questionable positions. Several of them have a secret reference to the famous cure of his niece, Mademoiselle Perier, by the holy thorn. But he is embarrassed with the difficult question whether miraculous events are sure tests of the doctrine which they support, and is not wholly consistent in his reasoning, or satisfactory in his distinctions. I am unable to pronounce whether Pascal's other observations on the rational proofs of Christianity are as original as they are frequently ingenious and powerful.

39. But the leading principle of Pascal's theology, that from which he deduces the necessary truth of revelation, is the fallen nature of mankind; dwelling less upon scriptural proofs, which he takes for granted, than on the evidence which he supposes man himself to supply. Nothing, however, can be more dissimilar than his beautiful visions to the vulgar Calvinism of the pulpit. It is not the sordid, groveling, degraded Caliban of that school, but the ruined archangel, that he delights to paint. Man is so great, that his greatness is manifest even in his knowledge of his own misery. A tree does not know itself to be miserable. It is true that to know we are miserable is misery; but still it is greatness to know it. All his misery proves his greatness: it is the misery of a great lord, of a king, dispossessed of their own. Man is the feeblest branch of nature, but it is a branch that thinks. He requires not the universe to crush him. He may be killed by a vapor, by a drop of water. But, if the whole universe should crush him, he would be nobler than that which causes his death, because he knows that he is dying, and the universe would not know its power over him. This is, very evidently, sophistical and declamatory; but it is the sophistry of a fine imagination. It would be easy, however, to find better passages. The dominant idea recurs in almost every page of Pascal. His melancholy genius plays in wild and rapid flashes, like lightning round the scathed oak, about the fallen greatness of man. He perceives every characteristic quality of his nature under these conditions. They are the solution of every problem, the clearing-up of every inconsistency that perplexes us. "Man," he says very finely, "has a secret instinct that leads him to seek diversion and employment from without; which springs

from the sense of his continual misery. And he has another secret instinct, remaining from the greatness of his original nature, which teaches him that happiness can only exist in repose. And from these two contrary instincts there arises in him an obscure propensity, concealed in his soul, which prompts him to seek repose through agitation, and even to fancy that the contentment he does not enjoy will be found, if, by struggling yet a little longer, he can open a door to rest.<sup>71</sup>

40. It can hardly be conceived, that any one would think the worse of human nature or of himself by reading these magnificent lamentations of Pascal. He adorns and ennoble the degeneracy that he exaggerates. The ruined aqueduct, the broken column, the desolated city, suggest no ideas but of dignity and reverence. No one is ashamed of a misery which bears witness to his grandeur. If we should persuade a laborer that the blood of princes flows in his veins, we might spoil his contentment with the only lot he has drawn, but scarcely kill in him the seeds of pride.

41. Pascal, like many others who have dwelt on this alleged degeneracy of mankind, seems never to have disentangled his mind from the notion, that what we call human nature has not merely an arbitrary and grammatical, but an intrinsic objective reality. The common and convenient forms of language, the analogies of sensible things, which the imagination readily supplies, conspire to delude us into this fallacy. Yet though each man is born with certain powers and dispositions which constitute his own nature, and the resemblance of these in all his fellows produces a general idea, or a collective appellation, whichever we may prefer to say, called the nature of man, few would in this age explicitly contend for the existence of this as a substance capable of qualities, and those qualities variable, or subject to mutation. The corruption of human nature is therefore a phrase which may convey an intelligible meaning, if it is acknowledged to be merely analogical and inexact, but will mislead those who do not keep this in mind. Man's nature, as it now is, that which each man and all men possess, is the immediate workmanship of God, as much as at his creation; nor is any other hypothesis consistent with theism.

42. This notion of a real universal in human nature pre-

<sup>1</sup> Œuvres de Pascal, vol. i. p. 121.

sents to us in an exaggerated light those anomalies from which writers of Pascal's school are apt to infer some vast change in our original constitution. Exaggerated, I say; for it cannot be denied that we frequently perceive a sort of incoherence, as it appears at least to our defective vision, in the same individual; and, like threads of various hues shot through one web, the love of vice and of virtue, the strength and weakness of the heart, are wonderfully blended in self-contradictory and self-destroying conjunction. But, even if we should fail altogether in solving the very first steps of this problem, there is no course for a reasonable being except to acknowledge the limitations of his own faculties; and it seems rather unwarrantable, on the credit of this humble confession, that we do not comprehend the depths of what has been withheld from us, to substitute something far more incomprehensible and revolting to our moral and rational capacities in its place. "What," says Pascal, "can be more contrary to the rules of our wretched justice, than to damn eternally an infant incapable of volition for an offence wherein he seems to have had no share, and which was committed six thousand years before he was born? Certainly, nothing shocks us more rudely than this doctrine; and yet, without this mystery, the most incomprehensible of all, we are incomprehensible to ourselves. Man is more inconceivable without this mystery, than the mystery is inconceivable to man."

43. It might be wandering from the proper subject of these volumes if we were to pause, even shortly, to inquire whether, while the creation of a world so full of evil must ever remain the most inscrutable of mysteries, we might not be led some way in tracing the connection of moral and physical evil in mankind with his place in that creation; and, especially, whether the law of continuity, which it has not pleased his Maker to break with respect to his bodily structure, and which binds that, in the unity of one great type, to the lower forms of animal life by the common conditions of nourishment, reproduction, and self-defence, has not rendered necessary both the physical appetites and the propensities which terminate in self; whether, again, the superior endowments of his intellectual nature, his susceptibility of moral emotion, and of those disinterested affections, which, if not exclusively, he far more intensely possesses than any inferior being; above all, the gifts of conscience, and a capacity to know God, — might

not be expected, even beforehand, by their conflict with the animal passions, to produce some partial inconsistencies, some anomalies at least, which he could not himself explain, in so compound a being. Every link in the long chain of creation does not pass by easy transition into the next. There are necessary chasms, and, as it were, leaps, from one creature to another, which, though not exceptions to the law of continuity, are accommodations of it to a new series of being. If man was made in the image of God, he was also made in the image of an ape. The framework of the body of him who has weighed the stars, and made the lightning his slave, approaches to that of a speechless brute who wanders in the forests of Sumatra. Thus standing on the frontier land between animal and angelic natures, what wonder that he should partake of both! But these are things which it is difficult to touch; nor would they have been here introduced, but in order to weaken the force of positions so confidently asserted by many, and so eloquently by Pascal.

44. Among the works immediately designed to confirm the truth of Christianity, a certain reputation was acquired, through the known erudition of its author, by the *Demonstratio Evangelica* of Huet, Bishop of Avranches. This is paraded with definitions, axioms, and propositions, in order to challenge the name it assumes. But the axioms, upon which so much is to rest, are often questionable or equivocal; as, for instance: "*Omnis prophetia est verax, quæ prædixit res eventu deinde completas*;" equivocal in the word *verax*. Huet also confirms his axioms by argument, which shows that they are not truly such. The whole book is full of learning; but he frequently loses sight of the points he would prove, and his quotations fall beside the mark. Yet he has furnished much to others, and possibly no earlier work on the same subject is so elaborate and comprehensive. The next place, if not a higher one, might be given to the treatise of Abbadie, a French refugee, published in 1684. His countrymen bestow on it the highest eulogies; but it was never so well known in England, and is now almost forgotten. The oral conferences of Limborch with Orobio, a Jew of considerable learning and ability, on the prophecies relating to the Messiah, were reduced into writing, and published: they are still in some request. No book of this period, among many that were written, reached so high a reputation in

Vindica-  
tions of  
Christianity.



England as Leslie's *Short Method with the Deists*, published in 1694; in which he has started an argument, pursued with more critical analysis by others, on the peculiarly distinctive marks of credibility that pertain to the scriptural miracles. The authenticity of this little treatise has been idly questioned on the Continent, for no better reason than that a translation of it has been published in a posthumous edition (1732) of the works of Saint Real, who died in 1692. But posthumous editions are never deemed of sufficient authority to establish a literary title against possession; and Prosper Marchand informs us that several other tracts, in this edition of Saint Real, are erroneously ascribed to him. The internal evidence that the *Short Method* was written by a Protestant should be conclusive.<sup>1</sup>

45. Every change in public opinion which this period witnessed confirmed the principles of religious toleration that had taken root in the earlier part of the century: the progress of a larger and more catholic theology, the weakening of bigotry in the minds of laymen, and the consequent disregard of ecclesiastical clamor, not only in England and Holland, but to a considerable extent in France; we might even add, the violent proceedings of the last government in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the cruelties which attended it. Louis XIV., at a time when mankind were beginning to renounce the very theory of persecution, renewed the ancient enormities of its practice, and thus unconsciously gave the aid of moral sympathy and indignation to the adverse argument. The Protestant refugees of France, scattered among their brethren, brought home to all minds the great question of free conscience; not with the

Progress of  
tolerant  
principles.

<sup>1</sup> The *Biographie Universelle*, art. "Leslie," says, "Cet ouvrage, qui passe pour ce qu'il a fait de mieux, lui a été contesté. Le Docteur Gleigh [sic] a fait de grands efforts pour prouver qu'il appartenait à Leslie, quoiqu'il fut publié parmi les ouvrages de l'Abbé de Saint Real, mort en 1692." It is melancholy to see this petty spirit of cavil against an English writer in so respectable a work as the *Biographie Universelle*. No *grandes efforts* could be required from Dr. Gleigh or any one else to prove that a book was written by Leslie, which bore his name, which was addressed to an English peer, and had gone through many editions, when there is literally no claimant on the other side; for a posthumous edition, forty years after the sup-

posed author's death, without attestation, is no literary evidence at all, even where the book is published for the first time, much less where it has a known *status* as the production of a certain author. This is so manifest to any one who has the slightest tincture of critical judgment, that we need not urge the palpable improbability of ascribing to Saint Real, a Romish ecclesiastic, an argument which turns peculiarly on the distinction between the scriptural miracles and those alleged upon inferior evidence. I have lost, or never made, the reference to Prosper Marchand; but this passage will be found in his *Dictionnaire Historique*, which contains a full article on Saint Real.

stupid and impudent limitation which even Protestants had sometimes employed, that truth indeed might not be restrained, but that error might: a broader foundation was laid by the great advocates of toleration in this period, — Bayle, Limborch, and Locke, — as it had formerly been by Taylor and Episcopius.<sup>1</sup>

46. Bayle, in 1686, while yet the smart of his banishment was keenly felt, published his Philosophical Commentary on the text in Scripture, "Compel them to come in;" a text which some of the advocates of persecution were accustomed to produce. He gives in the first part nine reasons against this literal meaning, among which none are philological. In the second part, he replies to various objections. This work of Bayle does not seem to me as subtle and logical as he was wont to be, notwithstanding the formal syllogisms with which he commences each of his chapters. His argument against compulsory conversions, which the absurd interpretation of the text by his adversaries required, is indeed irresistible; but this is far from sufficiently establishing the right of toleration itself. It appears not very difficult for a skilful sophist, and none was more so than Bayle himself, to have met some of his reasoning with a specious reply. The sceptical argument of Taylor, that we can rarely be sure of knowing the truth ourselves, and consequently of condemning in others what is error, he touches but slightly; nor does he dwell on the political advantages which experience has shown a full toleration to possess. In the third part of the Philosophical Commentary, he refutes the apology of Augustin for persecution; and, a few years afterwards, he published a supplement answering a book of Jurieu, which had appeared in the mean time.

Bayle's  
Philosophical  
Commentary.

47. Locke published anonymously his Letter on Toleration in 1689. The season was propitious: a legal toleration of public worship had first been granted to the dissenters after the Revolution, limited indeed to such as held most of the doctrines of the church, but preparing the nation for a more extensive application of its spirit. In the Liberty of Prophesying, Taylor had chiefly in view to

Locke's  
Letter on  
Toleration.

<sup>1</sup> The Dutch clergy, and a French minister in Holland, Jurieu, of great polemical fame in his day, though now chiefly known by means of his adversaries, Bayle and Le Clerc, strenuously resisted both the theory

of general toleration, and the moderate or liberal principles in religion which were connected with it. Le Clerc passed his life in fighting this battle; and many articles in the Bibliothèque Universelle relate to it.

deduce the justice of tolerating a diversity in religion, from the difficulty of knowing the truth. He is not very consistent as to the political question, and limits too narrowly the province of tolerable opinions. Locke goes more expressly to the right of the civil magistrate, not omitting, but dwelling less forcibly on, the chief arguments of his predecessor. His own theory of government came to his aid. The clergy in general, and perhaps Taylor himself, had derived the magistrate's jurisdiction from paternal power. And, as they apparently assumed this power to extend over adult children, it was natural to give those who succeeded to it in political communities a large sway over the moral and religious behavior of subjects. Locke, adopting the opposite theory of compact, defines the commonwealth to be a society of men constituted only for the procuring, preserving, and advancing their own civil interests. He denies altogether, that the care of souls belongs to the civil magistrate, as it has never been committed to him. "All the power of civil government relates only to men's civil interests, is confined to the things of this world, and hath nothing to do with the world to come."<sup>1</sup>

48. The admission of this principle would apparently decide the controversy, so far as it rests on religious grounds. But Locke has recourse to several other arguments independent of it. He proves, with no great difficulty, that the civil power cannot justly, or consistently with any true principle of religion, compel men to profess what they do not believe. This, however, is what very few would, at present, be inclined to maintain. The real question was as to the publicity of opinions deemed heterodox, and especially in social worship; and this is what those who held the magistrate to possess an authority patriarchal, universal, and arbitrary, and who were also rigidly tenacious of the necessity of an orthodox faith, as well as perfectly convinced that it was no other than their own, would hardly be persuaded to admit by any arguments that Locke has alleged. But the tendency of public opinion

<sup>1</sup> (This principle, that the civil magistrate is not concerned with religion as true, but only as useful, was strenuously maintained by Warburton. In his *Alliance of Church and State*. It is supported on scriptural grounds by Hoadly, in his famous sermon which produced the Bangorian controversy; and by Archbishop Whately, in a sermon on the same text as Hoadly's. "My kingdom is not of this world;" but with more closeness, though

not less decision and courage. I cannot, nevertheless, admit the principle as a conclusion from their premises, though very desirous to preserve it on other grounds. The late respected Dr. Arnold was exceedingly embarrassed by denying its truth, while he was strenuous for toleration in the simplest measure; which leaves his writings on the subject unsatisfactory, and weak against an adversary. — 1841.]

had begun to manifest itself against all these tenets of the high-church party, so that, in the eighteenth century, the principles of general tolerance became too popular to be disputed with any chance of attention. Locke was engaged in a controversy through his first Letter on Toleration, which produced a second and a third; but it does not appear to me that these, though longer than the first, have considerably modified its leading positions.<sup>1</sup> It is to be observed, that he pleads for the universal toleration of all modes of worship not immoral in their nature, or involving doctrines inimical to good government; placing in the latter category some tenets of the Church of Rome.

49. It is confessed by Goujet, that, even in the middle of the seventeenth century, France could boast very little of pulpit eloquence. Frequent quotations from French sermons. heathen writers, and from the schoolmen, with little solid morality and less good reasoning, make up the sermons of that age.<sup>2</sup> But the revolution in this style, as in all others, though perhaps gradual, was complete in the reign of Louis XIV. A slight sprinkling of passages from the fathers, and still more frequently from the Scriptures, but always short, and seeming to rise out of the preacher's heart, rather than to be sought for in his memory, replaced that intolerable parade of a theological commonplace book, which had been as customary in France as in England. The style was to be the perfection of French eloquence, the reasoning persuasive rather than dogmatic, the arrangement more methodical and distributive than at present, but without the excess we find in our old preachers. This is the general character of French sermons: but those who most adorned the pulpit had of course their individual distinctions. Without delaying to mention those who are now not greatly remembered, such as La Rue, Hubert, Mascaron, we must confine ourselves to three of high reputation,—Bourdaloue, Bossuet, and Fléchier.

50. Bourdaloue, a Jesuit, but as little of a Jesuit in the worst acceptance of the word as the order has produced, is remarkably simple, earnest, practical: he convinces rather

<sup>1</sup> Warburton has fancied that Locke's real sentiments are only discoverable in the first Letter on Toleration, and that in the two latter he "combats his intolerant adversary quite through the controversy with his own principles, well foreseeing that, at such a time of prejudice,

arguments built on received opinions would have greatest weight, and make quickest impression on the body of the people whom it was his business to gain."—Blagr. Britannica, art. "Locke."

<sup>2</sup> Bibliothèque Française, vol. II. p. 293



than commands, and by convincing he persuades; for his discourses tend always to some duty, to something that is to be done or avoided. His sentences are short, interrogative, full of plain and solid reasoning, unambitious in expression, and wholly without that care in the choice of words and cadences which we detect in Bossuet and Fléchier. No one would call Bourdaloue a rhetorician; and, though he continually introduces the fathers, he has not caught their vices of language.<sup>1</sup>

51. Bourdaloue is almost in the same relation to Bossuet as Patru to Le Maistre, though the two orators of the pulpit are far above those of the bar. As the one is short, condensed, plain, reasoning, and, though never feeble, not often what is generally called eloquent; so the other is animated, figurative, rather diffuse and prodigal of ornament, addressing the imagination more than the judgment, rich and copious in cadence, elevating the hearer to the pitch of his own sublimity. Bossuet is sometimes too declamatory, and Bourdaloue perhaps sometimes borders on dryness. Much in the sermons of the former is true poetry; but he has less of satisfactory and persuasive reasoning than the latter. His tone is also, as in all his writings, too domineering and dogmatical for those who demand something beyond the speaker's authority when they listen.

52. The sermons, however, of Bossuet, taken generally, are not reckoned in the highest class of his numerous writings: perhaps scarcely justice has been done to them. His genius, on the other hand, by universal confession, never shone higher than in the six which bear the name of *Oraisons Funèbres*. They belong in substance to much more naturally to the province of eloquence than of theology, that I should have reserved them for another place, if the separation would not have seemed rather unexpected to the reader. Few works of genius perhaps in the French language are better known, or have been more prodigally extolled. In that style of eloquence which the ancients called

<sup>1</sup> The public did justice to Bourdaloue, as they generally do to a solid and impressive style of preaching. "Je crois," says Goujet, p. 300, "que tout le monde convient qu'aucun autre ne lui est supérieur. C'est le grand maître pour l'éloquence de la chaire: c'est le prince des prédicateurs. Le public n'a jamais été partagé sur son sujet; la ville et la cour

l'ont également estimé et admiré. C'est qu'il avoit réuni en sa personne tous les grands caractères de la bonne éloquence; la simplicité du discours Chrétien, avec la majesté et la grandeur, le sublime avec l'intelligible et le populaire, la force avec la douceur, la véhémence avec l'ordonnance, la flatterie avec la justesse, et la plus vive ardeur avec la plus pure lumière."



demonstrative, or rather descriptive (*épideiktikos*), the style of panegyric or commemoration, they are doubtless superior to those justly celebrated productions of Thucydides and Plato that have descended to us from Greece; nor has Bossuet been equalled by any later writer. Those on the Queen of England, on her daughter the Duchess of Orleans, and on the Prince of Condé, outshine the rest; and, if a difference is to be made among these, we might perhaps, after some hesitation, confer the palm on the first. The range of topics is so various, the thoughts so just, the images so noble and poetical, the whole is in such perfect keeping, the tone of awful contemplation is so uniform, that, if it has not any passages of such extraordinary beauty as occur in the other two, its general effect on the mind is more irresistible.<sup>1</sup>

53. In this style, much more of ornament, more of what speaks in the spirit, and even the very phrase, of poetry, to the imagination and the heart, is permitted by a rigorous criticism, than in forensic or in deliberative eloquence. The beauties that rise before the author's vision are not re-nounced; the brilliant colors of his fancy are not subdued; the periods assume a more rhythmical cadence, and emulate, like metre itself, the voluptuous harmony of musical intervals: the whole composition is more evidently formed to delight; but it will delight to little purpose, or even cease, in any strong sense of the word, to do so at all, unless it is ennobled by moral wisdom. In this, Bossuet was pre-eminent: his thoughts are never subtle or far-fetched; they have a sort of breadth, a generality of application, which is peculiarly required in those who address a mixed assembly, and which many that aim at what is profound and original are apt to miss. It may be confessed, that these funeral discourses are not exempt from some defects, frequently inherent in panegyrical eloquence; they are sometimes too rhetorical, and do

<sup>1</sup> An English preacher of conspicuous renown for eloquence was called upon, within no great length of time, to emulate the funeral discourse of Bossuet on the sudden death of Henrietta of Orleans. He had before him a subject incomparably more deep in interest, more fertile in great and touching associations: he had to describe, not the false sorrow of courtiers, not the shriek of sudden surprise that echoed by night to the halls of Versailles, not the apocalyptic penitence of one so belated by the world's intercourse, but

the manly grief of an entire nation in the withering of those visions of hope which wait upon the untired youth of royalty, in its sympathy with grandeur annihilated, with beauty and innocence precipitated into the tomb. Nor did he sink beneath his subject, except as compared with Bossuet. The sermon to which my allusion will be understood is esteemed by many the finest effort of this preacher; but, if read together with that of its prototype, it will be laid aside as almost feeble and unimpressive.

not appear to show so little effort as some have fancied; the amplifications are sometimes too unmeasured; the language sometimes borders too nearly on that of the stage; above all, there is a tone of adulation not quite pleasing to a calm posterity.

54. Fléchier (the third name of the seventeenth century, for Massillon belongs only to the next), like Bossuet, has been more celebrated for his funeral sermons than for any others; but in this line it is unfortunate for him to enter into unavoidable competition with one whom he cannot rival. The French critics extol Fléchier for the arrangement and harmony of his periods; yet even in this, according to La Harpe, he is not essentially superior to Bossuet; and to an English ear, accustomed to the long swell of our own writers and of the Ciceronian school in Latin, he will probably not give so much gratification. He does not want a moral dignity, or a certain elevation of thought, without which the funeral panegyric must be contemptible: but he has not the majestic tone of Bossuet; he does not, like him, raise the heroes and princes of the earth in order to abase them by paintings of mortality and weakness; or recall the hearer in every passage to something more awful than human power, and more magnificent than human grandeur. This religious solemnity, so characteristic in Bossuet, is hardly felt in the less emphatic sentences of Fléchier. Even where his exordium is almost worthy of comparison, as in the funeral discourse on Turenne, we find him degenerate into a trivial eulogy, and he flatters both more profusely and with less skill. His style is graceful, but not without affectation and false taste.<sup>1</sup> La Harpe has compared him to Isocrates among the orators of Greece; the place of Demosthenes being, of course, reserved for Bossuet.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [La Harpe justly ridicules an expression of Fléchier, in his funeral sermon on Madame de Montausier: "Un ancien disait autrefois que les hommes étaient nés pour l'action et pour la conduite du monde, et que les dames n'étaient nées que pour le repos et pour la retraite."—1842.]

<sup>2</sup> The native critics ascribe a reform in the style of preaching to Paolo Segneri, whom Cornuau does not hesitate to call, with the sanction, he says, of posterity, the father of Italian eloquence. It is to be remembered, that in no country has the pulpit been so much degraded by empty declamation, and even by a stupid buff

foony. "The language of Segneri," the same writer observes, "is always full of dignity and harmony. He inlaid it with splendid and elegant expressions, and has thus obtained a place among the authors to whom authority has been given by the Della Crusca dictionary. His periods are flowing, natural, and intelligible, without the affectation of obsolete Tuscanisms, which pass for graces of the language with many." Tiraboschi, with much commendation of Segneri, admits that we find in him some vestiges of the false taste he endeavored to reform. The very title that I have seen of the sermons of Segneri gives

55. The style of preaching in England was less ornamental, and spoke less to the imagination and affections, than these celebrated writers of the Gallican Church; but in some of our chief divines it had its own excellences. The sermons of Barrow display a strength of mind, a comprehensiveness and fertility, which have rarely been equalled. No better proof can be given than his eight sermons on the government of the tongue: copious and exhaustive without tautology or superfluous declamation, they are, in moral preaching, what the best parts of Aristotle are in ethical philosophy, with more of development and a more extensive observation. It would be said of these sermons, and indeed, with a few exceptions, of all those of Barrow, that they are not what is now called evangelical: they indicate the ascendancy of an Arminian party, dwelling, far more than is usual in the pulpit, on moral and rational, or even temporal inducements, and sometimes hardly abstaining from what would give a little offence in later times.<sup>1</sup> His quotations also from ancient philosophers, though not so numerous as in Taylor, are equally uncongenial to our ears. In his style, notwithstanding its richness and occasional vivacity, we may censure a redundancy, and excess of apposition: it is not sufficient to avoid strict tautology; no second phrase (to lay down a general rule not without exception) should be so like the first, that the reader would naturally have understood it to be comprised

English  
sermons:  
Barrow.

no impression of any merit that can be reckoned more than relative to the miserable tone of his predecessors. The following specimen is from one of his most admired sermons: "E Cristo non potrà ottenere da voi che gli rimettiate un torto, un affronto, un agravio, una parola? Che vorreste da Cristo? Vorreste ch'egli vi si gettasse supplichevole a piedi a chiedervi questa grazia? Io son quasi per dire ch'egli li farebbe; perchè se non dubiti di prostrarsi a piedi di un traditore, qual' era Giuda, di lavarglieli, di asciugarglieli, di bacarglieli, non si vergognerebbe, anzi lo, di farsi vedere ginocchioni a piedi vostri. Ma vi fa bisogno di tanto per muovervi a compiacerlo? Ah Cavalieri, Cavalieri, io non vorrei questa volta farvi arrossire. Nel resto io so di certo, che se altrettanto fosse a voi domandato da quella donna che chiamate la vostra dama, da quella, di cui forestieri idolatrano il volto, indovinate le voglie, ambite le grazie, non vi sarete pregar tanto a concederglielo. E

poi vi fate pregar tanto da un Dio per voi cresciuto? O confusione! O vitupero! O vergogna!"—*Raccolta di Prose Italiane* (in *I classici Italiani*), vol. II. p. 346.

This is certainly not the manner of Bossuet, and more like that of a third-rate Methodist among us.

<sup>1</sup> Thus, in his sermon against evil-speaking (xvi.), Barrow treats it as fit "for rustic bores, or men of coarsest education and employment, who, having their minds debased by being conversant in meanest affairs, do vent their sorry passions, and bicker about their petty concerns, in such strains; who also, not being capable of a fair reputation, or sensible of dignity to themselves, do little value the credit of others, or care for aspersing it. But such language is unworthy of these persons, and cannot easily be drawn from them, who are wont to exercise their thoughts about nobler matters," &c. No one would venture this now from the pulpit.

therein. Barrow's language is more antiquated and formal than that of his age; and he abounds too much in uncommon words of Latin derivation, frequently such as appear to have no authority but his own.

56. South's sermons begin, in order of date, before the Restoration, and come down to nearly the end of the century. They were much celebrated at the time, and retain a portion of their renown. This is by no means surprising. South had great qualifications for that popularity which attends the pulpit; and his manner was at that time original. Not diffuse, not learned, not formal in argument like Barrow, with a more natural structure of sentences; a more pointed, though by no means a more fair and satisfactory, turn of reasoning; with a style clear and English, free from all pedantry, but abounding with those colloquial novelties of idiom, which, though now become vulgar and offensive, the age of Charles II. affected; sparing no personal or temporary sarcasm, but, if he seems for a moment to tread on the verge of buffoonery, recovering himself by some stroke of vigorous sense and language, — such was the witty Dr. South, whom the courtiers delighted to hear. His sermons want all that is called unction, and sometimes even earnestness, which is owing, in a great measure, to a perpetual tone of gibing at rebels and fanatics; but there is a masculine spirit about them, which, combined with their peculiar characteristics, would naturally fill the churches where he might be heard. South appears to bend towards the Arminian theology, without adopting so much of it as some of his contemporaries.

57. The sermons of Tillotson were for half a century more read than any in our language. They are now bought almost as waste paper, and hardly read at all. Such is the fickleness of religious taste, as abundantly numerous instances would prove. Tillotson is reckoned verbose and languid. He has not the former defect in nearly so great a degree as some of his eminent predecessors; but there is certainly little vigor or vivacity in his style. Full of the Romish controversy, he is perpetually recurring to that "world's debate;" and he is not much less hostile to all the Calvinistic tenets. What is most remarkable in the theology of Tillotson, is his strong assertion, in almost all his sermons, of the principles of natural religion and morality, not only as the basis of all revelation, without a dependence



in which it cannot be believed, but as nearly coincident with Christianity in their extent; a length to which few at present would be ready to follow him. Tillotson is always of a tolerant and catholic spirit, enforcing right actions rather than orthodox opinions, and obnoxious, for that and other reasons, to all the bigots of his own age.

58. It has become necessary to draw towards a conclusion of this chapter: the materials are far from being exhausted. In expository, or, as some call it, <sup>Expository</sup> <sup>theology.</sup> dogmatical theology, the English divines had already taken a conspicuous station. André, no partial estimator of Protestant writers, extols them with marked praise.<sup>1</sup> Those who belonged to the earlier part of the century form a portion of a vast collection, — the *Critici Sacri*, published by one Bee, a bookseller, in 1660. This was in nine folio volumes; and in 1669, Matthew Pool, a nonconforming minister, produced his *Synopsis Criticorum* in five volumes; being in great measure an abridgment and digest of the former. Bee complained of the infraction of his copyright, or rather his equitable interest; but such a dispute hardly pertains to our history.<sup>2</sup> The work of Pool was evidently a more original labor than the former Hammond, Patrick, and other commentators, do honor to the Anglican Church in the latter part of the century.

59. Pearson's Exposition of the Apostles' Creed, published in 1659, is a standard book in English divinity. It <sup>Pearson on</sup> <sup>the Creed.</sup> expands, beyond the literal purport of the creed itself, to most articles of orthodox belief, and is a valuable summary of arguments and authorities on that side. The closeness of Pearson, and his judicious selections of proofs, distinguish him from many, especially the earlier theologians. Some might surmise that his undeviating adherence to what he calls the church is hardly consistent with independence of thinking; but, considered as an advocate, he is one of much judgment and skill. Such men as Pearson and Stillingfleet would have been conspicuous at the bar, which we could not quite affirm of Jeremy Taylor.

60. Simon, a regular priest of the congregation called The Oratory, which has been rich in eminent men, owes much of his fame to his *Critical History* of the Old Testament. This work, bold in many of its positions, as it then seemed to both

<sup>1</sup> « I soli Inglesi, che ampio spazio non dovrebbero occupare in questo capo dell' eseguitica sacra, se l' istituto della nostra »

opera ci permettesse tener dietro a tutti i più degni della nostra stima? » — Vol. xix. p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Chalmers



the Catholic and Protestant orthodox, after being nearly strangled by Bossuet in France, appeared at Rotterdam in 1685. Bossuet attacked it with extreme vivacity, but with a real inferiority to Simon both in learning and candor.<sup>1</sup> Le Clerc, on his side, carped more at the Critical History than it seems to deserve. Many paradoxes, as they then were called, in this famous work, are now received as truth, or at least pass without reproof. Simon may possibly be too prone to novelty; but a love of truth as well as great acuteness are visible throughout. His Critical History of the New Testament was published in 1689, and one or two more works of a similar description before the close of the century.

61. I have on a former occasion adverted, in a corresponding chapter, to publications on witchcraft and similar superstitions. Several might be mentioned at this time: the belief in such tales was assailed by a prevalent scepticism which called out their advocates. Of these the most unworthy to have exhibited their great talents in such a cause were our own philosophers, Henry More and Joseph Glanvil. The *Sadducismus Triumphatus*, or *Treatise on Apparitions*, by the latter, has passed through several editions; while his *Scepais Scientifien* has hardly been seen, perhaps, by six living persons. A Dutch minister, by name Bekker, raised a great clamor against himself by a downright denial of all power to the devil, and consequently to his supposed instruments, the ancient beldams of Holland and other countries. His *Monde Enchanté*, originally published in Dutch, is in four volumes, written in a systematic manner, and with tedious prolixity. There was no ground for imputing infidelity to the author, except the usual ground of calumniating every one who quits the beaten path in theology; but his explanations of Scripture, in the case of the demoniacs and the like, are, as usual with those who have taken the same line, rather forced. The fourth volume, which contains several curious stories of imagined possession, and some which resemble what is now called magnetism, is the only part of Bekker's once-celebrated book that can be read with any pleasure. Bekker was a Cartesian, and his theory was built too much on Cartesian assumptions of the impossibility of spirit acting on body.

<sup>1</sup> *Défense de la Tradition des Saints Pères*; Œuvres de Bossuet, vol. vi., and Instructions sur la Version du N. T., imprimée à Trevoux, 14. vol. iv. p. 318, Bausset, Vie de Bossuet, iv. 276.

## CHAPTER III.

## HISTORY OF SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY FROM 1650 TO 1700

*Aristotelians — Logicians — Cadworth — Sketch of the Philosophy of Gassendi — Cartesianism — Port-Royal Logic — Analysis of the Search for Truth of Malebranche, and of the Ethics of Spinoza — Glanvil — Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding.*

1. THE Aristotelian and scholastic metaphysics, though shaken on every side, and especially by the rapid progress of the Cartesian theories, had not lost their hold over the theologians of the Roman Church, or even the Protestant universities, at the beginning of this period, and hardly at its close. Brucker enumerates several writers of that class in Germany;<sup>1</sup> and we find, as late as 1693, a formal injunction by the Sorbonne, that none who taught philosophy in the colleges under its jurisdiction should introduce any novelties, or swerve from the Aristotelian doctrine.<sup>2</sup> The Jesuits, rather unfortunately for their credit, distinguished themselves as strenuous advocates of the old philosophy, and thus lost the advantage they had obtained in philology as enemies of barbarous prejudice, and encouragers of a progressive spirit in their disciples. Rapin, one of their most accomplished men, after speaking with little respect of the *Novum Organum*, extols the disputations of the schools as the best method in the education of young men, who, as he fancies, have too little experience to delight in physical science.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iv. See his long and laborious chapter on the Aristotelian philosophers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: no one else seems to have done more than copy Brucker.

<sup>2</sup> "Cum relatum esset ad Societatem (Sorbonensem) nonnullos philosophos professores, ex his etiam aliquando qui ad Societatem pertinebant, novas quasdam doctrinas in philosophicis sectari, minusque

Aristotelicam doctrinam studere, quam hactenus usurpatum fuerit in Academia Parisiensi, censuit Societas injungendum esse illis, imo et illis qui docent philosophiam in collegiis suo regimini creditis, ne deinceps novitatibus studeant, aut ab Aristotelica doctrina deflectant. 31 Dec. 1693." — *Argentré, Collectio Judiciorum*, ii. 150.

<sup>3</sup> *Réflexions sur la Poétique*, p. 368. He admits, however, that to introduce

2. It is a difficult and dangerous choice, in a new state of public opinion (and we have to make it at present), between that which may itself pass away, and that which must efface what has gone before. Those who clung to the ancient philosophy believed that Bacon and Descartes were the idols of a transitory fashion, and that the wisdom of long ages would regain its ascendancy. They were deceived, and their own reputation has been swept off with the systems to which they adhered. Thomas White, an English Catholic priest, whose Latin appellation is Albius, endeavored to maintain the Aristotelian metaphysics and the scholastic terminology in several works, and especially in an attack upon Glanvil's *Vanity of Dogmatizing*. This book, entitled *Sciri*, I know only through Glanvil's reply in his second edition, by which White appears to be a mere Aristotelian. He was a friend of Sir Kenelm Digby, who was himself, though a man of considerable talents, incapable of disentangling his mind from the Peripatetic hypotheses. The power of words indeed is so great; the illusions of what is called realism, or of believing that general terms have an objective exterior being, are so natural, and especially so bound up both with our notions of essential, especially theological, truth, and with our popular language, — that no man could in that age be much censured for not casting off his fetters, even when he had heard the call to liberty from some modern voices. We find that, even after two centuries of a better method, many are always ready to fall back into a verbal process of theorizing.

3. Logic was taught in the Aristotelian method, or rather in one which, with some change for the worse, had been gradually founded upon it. Burgersdicius, in this and in other sciences, seems to have been in repute. Smiglecius also is mentioned with praise.<sup>1</sup> These lived both

more experiment and observation would be an improvement. "Du reste il y a apparence que les loix, qui ne souffrent point d'innovation dans l'usage des choses universellement établies, n'autorisent point d'autre méthode que celle qui est aujourd'hui en usage dans les universités; afin de ne pas donner trop de licence à la passion qu'on a naturellement pour les nouvelles opinions, dont le cours est d'une dangereuse conséquence dans un état bien réglé; vu particulièrement que la philosophie est un des organes dont

se sert la religion pour s'expliquer dans ses décisions."

<sup>1</sup> "La Logique de Smiglecius," says Huet, "est un bel ouvrage." The same writer proceeds to observe, that the Spaniards of the preceding century had corrupted logic by their subtilties. "En se jetant dans des spéculations creuses qui n'avoient rien de réel, leurs philosophes trouverent l'art d'avoir de la raison malgré le bon sens, et de donner de la couleur, et même je ne sais quoi de spécieux, à ce qui étoit le plus déraisonnable." — p. 322. But this

in the former part of the century. But they were superseded, at least in England, by Wallis, whose *Institutio Logicæ ad Communes Usus Accommodata* was published in 1687. He claims, as an improvement upon the received system, the classifying singular propositions among universals.<sup>1</sup> Ramus had made a third class of them, and in this he seems to have been generally followed. Aristotle, though it does not appear that he is explicit on the subject, does not rank them as particular. That Wallis is right will not be doubted by any one at present; but his originality we must not assert. The same had been perceived by the authors of the Port-Royal Logic; a work to which he has made no allusion.<sup>2</sup> Wallis claims also as his own the method of reducing hypothetical to categorical syllogisms, and proves it elaborately in a separate dissertation. A smaller treatise, still much used at Oxford, by Aldrich, *Compendium Artis Logicæ*, 1691, is clear and concise, but seems to contain nothing very important; and he alludes to the *Art de Penser* in a tone of insolence, which must rouse indignation in those who are acquainted with that excellent work. Aldrich's censures are, in many instances, mere cavil and misrepresentation: I do not know that they are right in any.<sup>3</sup> Of the *Art de Penser* itself, we shall have something to say in the course of this chapter.

4. Before we proceed to those whose philosophy may be reckoned original, or at least modern, a very few deserve mention who have endeavored to maintain or restore that of antiquity. Stanley's History of Philosophy, in 1655, is in great measure confined to biography,

Stanley's  
History of  
Philosophy

must have been rather the fault of their metaphysics than of what is strictly called logic.

<sup>1</sup> "Atque hoc dignanter notatum velim, quia novus forte hic videatur, et præter aliorum loquendi formulam hæc dicere. Nam plerique logici propositionem quæ vocatur singularem, hoc est, de subiecto individuo sive singulari, pro particulari habent, non universali. Sed perperam hoc faciunt, et præter mentem Aristotelis (qui, quantum membra, nunquam ejusmodi singularem, τῆς κατὰ μέρος appellat aut pro tali habet), et præter rei naturam: Non enim hic agitur de particularitate subiecti (quod ἀτομὸν vocat Aristoteles, non κατὰ μέρος) sed de partialitate prædicationis. . . . Neque ego interim novator commendus nisi quia hæc dixerim, sed illi potius novatores qui ab Aristotelica doc-

trina recesserint: eoque multa introduxerint incommoda de quibus suo loco dicetur."—p. 125. He has afterwards a separate dissertation or thesis to prove this more at length. It seems that the Bamlete held a third class of propositions, neither universal nor particular, to which they gave the name of *propria*, equivalent to singular.

<sup>2</sup> *Art de Penser*, part II. chap. III.

<sup>3</sup> One of Aldrich's charges against the author of the *Art de Penser* is, that he brings forward as a great discovery the equality of the angles of a chillegon to 1008 right angles; and another is, that he gives as an example of a regular syllogism one that has obviously five terms; thus exporting the Oxford students for whom he wrote to believe that Antony Arnauld neither knew the first book of Euclid nor the mere rudiments of common logic.



and comprehends no name later than Carneades. Most is derived from Diogenes Laertius; but an analysis of the Platonic philosophy is given from Alcinous, and the author has compiled one of the Peripatetic system from Aristotle himself. The doctrine of the Stoics is also elaborately deduced from various sources. Stanley, on the whole, brought a good deal from an almost untrodden field; but he is merely an historian, and never a critic of philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

5. Gale's Court of the Gentiles, which appeared partly in 1669 and partly in later years, is incomparably a more learned work than that of Stanley. Its aim is to prove that all heathen philosophy, whether barbaric or Greek, was borrowed from the Scriptures, or at least from the Jews. The first part is entitled, Of Philology, which traces the same leading principle by means of language; the second, Of Philosophy; the third treats of the Vanity of Philosophy; and the fourth, of Reformed Philosophy, "wherein Plato's moral and metaphysic or prime philosophy is reduced to an usual form and method." Gale has been reckoned among Platonic philosophers, and indeed he professes to find a great resemblance between the philosophy of Plato and his own. But he is a determined Calvinist in all respects, and scrupulously not to say, "Whatever God wills is just, because he wills it," and again, "God willet nothing without himself because it is just, but it is therefore just because he willet it. The reasons of good and evil extrinsic to the divine essence are all dependent on the divine will, either decernment or legislative."<sup>2</sup> It is not likely that Plato would have acknowledged such a disciple.

6. A much more eminent and enlightened man than Gale, Ralph Cudworth, by his Intellectual System of the Universe, published in 1678, but written several years before, placed himself in a middle point between the declining and rising schools of philosophy: independent of authority, and more close perhaps in argument than the former; but more prodigal of learning, more tech- in language, and less conversant with analytical and indu-

<sup>1</sup> [In former editions, through an oversight altogether inexplicable by me at present, I had said that Stanley does not mention Epicurus, who occupies a considerable space in the History of Philosophy. I have searched my notes in vain

for the source of this mistake, and am gratefully pointed out to me. I think it fitter to make this public acknowledgment than silently to write sentence. — 1847.]

<sup>2</sup> Part iv. p. 339.



processes of reasoning, than the latter. Upon the whole, however, he belongs to the school of antiquity; and probably his wish was to be classed with it. Cudworth was one of those whom Hobbes had roused by the atheistic and immoral theories of the Leviathan; nor did any antagonist perhaps of that philosopher bring a more vigorous understanding to the combat. This understanding was not so much obstructed in its own exercise by a vast erudition, as it is sometimes concealed by it from the reader. Cudworth has passed more for a recorder of ancient philosophy, than for one who might stand in a respectable class among philosophers; and his work, though long, being unfinished, as well as full of digression, its object has not been fully apprehended.

7. This object was to establish the liberty of human actions against the fatalists. Of these he lays it down that there are three kinds: the first atheistic; the second admitting a Deity, but one acting necessarily and without moral perfections; the third granting the moral attributes of God, but asserting all human actions to be governed by necessary laws which he has ordained. The first book of the Intellectual System, which alone is extant, relates wholly to the proofs of the existence of a Deity against the atheistic fatalists, his moral nature being rarely or never touched; so that the greater and more interesting part of the work, for the sake of which the author projected it, is wholly wanting, unless we take for fragments of it some writings of the author preserved in the British Museum.

8. The first chapter contains an account of the ancient corpuscular philosophy, which, till corrupted by Leucippus and Democritus, Cudworth takes to have been not only theistic, but more consonant to theistic principles than any other. These two, however, brought in a fatalism grounded on their own atomic theory. In the second chapter, he states very fully and fairly all their arguments, or rather all that have ever been adduced on the atheistic side. In the third, he expatiates on the hylozoic atheism, as he calls it, of Strato, which accounts the universe to be animated in all its parts, but without a single controlling intelligence; and adverts to another hypothesis, which gives a vegetable but not sentient life to the world.

9. This leads Cudworth to his own famous theory of a plastic nature, a device to account for the operations of physical

laws without the continued agency of the Deity. Of this plastic <sup>His plastic</sup> energy he speaks in rather a confused and indefinite nature. manner, giving it in one place a sort of sentient life, or what he calls "a drowsy unawakened cogitation," and always treating it as an entity or real being. This language of Cudworth, and indeed the whole hypothesis of a plastic nature, was unable to stand the searching eye of Bayle, who, in an article of his dictionary, pointed out its unphilosophical and dangerous assumptions. Le Clerc endeavored to support Cudworth against Bayle, but with little success.<sup>1</sup> It has had, however, some partisans, though rather among physiologists than metaphysicians. Grew adopted it to explain vegetation; and the plastic nature differs only, as I conceive, from what Hunter and Abernethy have called life in organized bodies by its more extensive agency: for if we are to believe that there is a vital power, not a mere name for the sequence of phenomena, which marshals the molecules of animal and vegetable substance, we can see no reason why a similar energy should not determine other molecules to assume geometrical figures in crystallization. The error or paradox consists in assigning a real unity of existence, and a real power of causation, to that which is unintelligent.

10. The fourth chapter of the Intellectual System, of vast length, and occupying half the entire work, launches <sup>His account of old philosophy.</sup> into a sea of old philosophy, in order to show the unity of a supreme God to have been a general belief of antiquity. "In this fourth chapter," he says, "we were necessitated by the matter itself to run out into philology and antiquity, as also in the other parts of the book we do often give an account of the doctrine of the ancients; which, however some over-severe philosophers may look upon fastidiously or undervalue and depreciate, yet as we conceived it often necessary, so possibly may the variety thereof not be ungrateful to others, and this mixture of philology throughout the whole sweeten and allay the severity of philosophy to them; the main thing which the book pretends to, in the mean time, being the philosophy of religion. But, for our part, we neither call philology, nor yet philosophy, our mistress, but serve ourselves of either as occasion requireth."<sup>2</sup>

11. The whole fourth chapter may be reckoned one great episode; and, as it contains a store of useful knowledge on

<sup>1</sup> Bibliothèque Choiseul, vol. v.

<sup>2</sup> Preface, p. 27.

ancient philosophy, it has not only been more read than the remaining part of the Intellectual System, but has been the cause, in more than one respect, that the work has been erroneously judged. Thus Cudworth has been reckoned, by very respectable authorities, in the Platonic school of philosophers, and even in that of the later Platonists; for which I perceive little other reason than that he has gone diffusely into a supposed resemblance between the Platonic and Christian Trinity. Whether we agree with him in this or no, the subject is insulated, and belongs only to the history of theological opinion: in Cudworth's own philosophy, he appears to be an eclectic; not the vassal of Plato, Plotinus, or Aristotle, though deeply versed in them all.<sup>1</sup>

12. In the fifth and last chapter of the first and only book of the Intellectual System, Cudworth, reverting to the various atheistical arguments which he had stated in the second chapter, answers them at great length, and, though not without much erudition, perhaps more than was requisite, yet depending chiefly on his own stores of reasoning. And inasmuch as even a second rate philosopher ranks higher in literary precedence than the most learned reporter of other men's doctrine, it may be unfortunate for Cudworth's reputation that he consumed so much time in the preceding chapter upon mere learning, even though that should be reckoned more useful than his own reasonings. These, however, are frequently valuable; and, as I have intimated above, he is partially tainted by the philosophy of his own generation, while he endeavors to tread in the ancient paths. Yet he seems not aware of the place which Bacon, Descartes, and Gassendi were to hold; and not only names them sometimes with censure, hardly with praise, but most inexcusably throws out several intimations that they had designedly served the cause of atheism. The disposition of the two former to slight the argument from final causes, though it might justly be animadverted upon, could not warrant this most uncandid and untrue aspersion. But

His arguments  
against  
atheism.

<sup>1</sup> ["Cudworth," says a late very learned and strong-minded writer, "should be read with the notes of Mosheim; unless, indeed, one be so acquainted with the philosophy and religion of the ancients, and so accustomed to reasoning, and to estimating the power and the ambiguity of language, as to be able to correct for himself his de-

ceptive representations. He deserves the highest praise for integrity as a writer: his learning was superabundant, and his intellect vigorous enough to wield it to his purpose. But he transfers his own conceptions to the heathen philosophers and religionists," &c.—Norton on Genuine-ness of Gospels, vol. II. p. 215.—1847.]

justice was even-handed. Cudworth himself did not escape the slander of bigots: it was idly said by Dryden, that he had put the arguments against a Deity so well, that some thought he had not answered them; and, if Warburton may be believed, the remaining part of the Intellectual System was never published, on account of the world's malignity in judging of the first.<sup>1</sup> Probably it was never written.

13. Cudworth is too credulous and uncritical about ancient writings, defending all as genuine, even where his own age had been sceptical. His terminology is stiff and pedantic, as is the case with all our older metaphysicians, abounding in words which the English language has not recognized. He is full of the ancients, but rarely quotes the schoolmen. Hobbes is the adversary with whom he most grapples: the materialism, the resolving all ideas into sensation, the low morality of that writer, were obnoxious to the animadversion of so strenuous an advocate of a more elevated philosophy. In some respects, Cudworth has, as I conceive, much the advantage; in others, he will generally be thought by our metaphysicians to want precision and logical reasoning; and, upon the whole, we must rank him, in philosophical acumen, far below Hobbes, Malebranche, and Locke, but also far above any mere Aristotelians or retailers of Scotus and Aquinas.<sup>2</sup>

14. Henry More, though by no means less eminent than Cudworth in his own age, ought not to be placed on the same level. More fell not only into the mystical notions of the later Platonists, but even of the Cabalistic writers. His metaphysical philosophy was borrowed in great measure from them; and though he was in correspondence with Descartes, and enchanted with the new views that opened upon him, yet we find that he was reckoned much less of a Cartesian afterwards, and even wrote against parts of the theory.<sup>3</sup> The most peculiar tenet of More was the extension of spirit: acknowledging and even striving for the soul's immateriality, he still could not conceive it to be unextended.

<sup>1</sup> Warburton's preface to *Divine Legation*, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> [The inferiority of Cudworth to Hobbes is not at present very manifest to me. — 1847.]

<sup>3</sup> Baillet, *Vie de Descartes*, liv. vii. It must be observed that More never wholly agreed with Descartes. Thus they differed

about the omnipresence of the Deity: Descartes thought that he was "partout à raison de sa puissance, et qu'à raison de son essence il n'a absolument aucune relation au lieu." More, who may be called a lover of extension, maintained a strictly local presence. — *Œuvres de Descartes*, vol. x. p. 229.

Yet it seems evident, that if we give extension as well as figure, which is implied in finite extension, to the single self-conscious monad, qualities as heterogeneous to thinking as material impenetrability itself, we shall find it in vain to deny the possibility at least of the latter. Some, indeed, might question whether what we call matter is any real being at all, except as extension under peculiar conditions. But this conjecture need not here be pressed.

15. Gassendi himself, by the extensiveness of his erudition, may be said to have united the two schools of speculative philosophy, the historical and the experimental; though the character of his mind determined him far more towards the latter. He belongs, in point of time, rather to the earlier period of the century; but, his *Syntagma Philosophicum* having been published in 1658, we have deferred the review of it for this volume. This posthumous work, in two volumes folio, and nearly 1,600 pages closely printed in double columns, is divided into three parts,—the *Logic*, the *Physics*, and the *Ethics*; the second occupying more than five-sixths of the whole. The *Logic* is introduced by two proemial books: one containing a history of the science from Zeno of Elea, the parent of systematic logic, to Bacon and Descartes;<sup>1</sup> the other, still more valuable, on the criteria of truth; shortly criticising also, in a chapter of this book, the several schemes of logic which he had merely described in the former. After stating very prolixly, as is usual with him, the arguments of the sceptics against the evidence of the senses, and those of the dogmatics, as he calls them, who refer the sole criterion of truth to the understanding, he proponnds a sort of middle course. It is necessary, he observes, before we can infer truth, that there should be some sensible sign, *αἰσθητὸν σημεῖον*; for, since all the knowledge we possess is derived from the sense, the mind must first have some sensible image, by which it may be led to a knowledge of what is latent and not perceived by sense. Hence we

Gassendi.

His Logic.

<sup>1</sup> "Præterendum porro non est ob eam, quæ est, celebritatem Organum, sive logicæ Francisci Baconis Verulamii." He extols Bacon highly, but gives an analysis of the *Novum Organum* without much criticism. De *Logicæ Origine*, c. x.

<sup>2</sup> *Logicæ Verulamii*. "Gassendi says in another place, "tota ac per se ad physicam, atque adeo ad veritatem notitiamve rerum germanam habendam contendit. Principiis

autem in eo est, ut bene imaginemur, quantum vult esse imprimis exuenda omnia præjudicia, ac novæ deinde notionēs ideæve ex novis deinceps tactis experimentis induendas. *Logicæ Cartesii* rectè quidem Verulamii imitatione ab eo exoritur, quod ad bene imaginandum prava præjudicia exuenda, recta vero induenda vult," &c.—p. 100.



may distinguish in ourselves a double criterion: one by which we perceive the sign, namely, the senses; another by which we understand through reasoning the latent thing, namely, the intellect or rational faculty.<sup>1</sup> This he illustrates by the pores of the skin, which we do not perceive, but infer their existence by observing the permeation of moisture.

16. In the first part of the treatise itself on Logic, to which these two books are introductory, Gassendi <sup>His theory of ideas,</sup> lays down again his favorite principle, that every idea in the mind is ultimately derived from the senses. But, while what the senses transmit are only singular ideas, the mind has the faculty of making general ideas out of a number of these singular ones when they resemble each other.<sup>2</sup> In this part of his Logic, he expresses himself clearly and unequivocally a conceptualist.

17. The Physics were expanded with a prodigality of learning upon every province of nature. Gassendi is full of quotation; and his systematic method manifests the comprehensiveness of his researches. In the third book of the second part of the third section of the Physics, he treats of the immateriality, and, in the fourteenth, of the immortality, of the soul, and maintains the affirmative of both propositions. This may not be what those who judge of Gassendi merely from his objections to the Meditations of Descartes have supposed. But a clearer insight into his metaphysical theory will be obtained from the ninth book of the same part of the Physics, entitled *De Intellectu, on the Human Understanding*.

18. In this book, after much display of erudition on the tenets of philosophers, he determines the soul to be <sup>And of the nature of the soul.</sup> an incorporeal substance, created by God, and infused into the body, so that it resides in it as an informing and not merely a present nature, *forma informans, et non simpliciter assistens*.<sup>3</sup> He next distinguishes intellection or understanding from imagination or perception; which is worthy of particular notice, because, in his controversy with Descartes, he had thrown out doubts as to any distinction between

<sup>1</sup> P. 81. If this passage be well attended to, it will show how the philosophy of Gassendi has been misunderstood by those who confound it with the merely sensual school of metaphysicians. No one has more clearly, or more at length, distin-

guished the *αἰσθητὸν σημεῖον*, the sensible associated sign, from the *διανοητὸν ὄντος*, the object of pure intellect, as we shall soon see.

<sup>2</sup> P. 83.

<sup>3</sup> P. 140.

them. We have in ourselves a kind of faculty which enables us, by means of reasoning, to understand that which by no endeavors we can imagine or represent to the mind.<sup>1</sup> Of this, the size of the sun, or innumerable other examples, might be given: the mind having no idea suggested by the imagination of the sun's magnitude, but knowing it by a peculiar operation of reason. And hence we infer that the intellectual soul is immaterial, because it understands that which no material image presents to it; as we infer also that the imaginative faculty is material, because it employs the images supplied by sense. It is true, that the intellect makes use of these sensible images as steps towards its reasoning upon things which cannot be imagined; but the proof of its immateriality is given by this, that it passes beyond all material images, and attains a true knowledge of that whereof it has no image.

19. Buhle observes, that, in what Gassendi has said on the power of the mind to understand what it cannot conceive, there is a forgetfulness of his principle, that nothing is in the understanding which has not been in the sense. But, unless we impute repeated contradictions to this philosopher, he must have meant that axiom in a less extended sense than it has been taken by some who have since employed it. By that which is "in the understanding," he could only intend definite images derived from sense, which must be present before the mind can exercise any faculty, or proceed to reason up to unimaginable things. The fallacy of the sensualist school, English and French, has been to conclude that we can have no knowledge of that which is not "in the understanding;" an inference true in the popular sense of words, but false in the metaphysical.

20. There is, moreover, Gassendi proceeds, a class of reflex

<sup>1</sup> "Inque est in nobis intellectus species, quo ratiocinando et provehimur, ut aliquid intelligamus, quod imaginari, vel ejus habere observantem imaginem, quantumcumque animi vires contulerimus, non possumus." . . . After instanceing the size of the sun, "possunt consimile sexcenta afferri. . . . Verum quidem totum sufficit, ut constet quidam nos intelligere quod imaginari non licet, et intellectum ita esse distinctum a phantasia, ut cum phantasia habent materiales species, sub quibus res imaginantur, non habent tamen intellectus, sub quibus res intelliguntur. . . . unde illam, v. g. habet animi quam in sole habet."

vi propria, seu ratiocinando, cum esse in sole magnitudinem comprehendit, ac pari modo cetera. Nempe ex hoc efficitur, ut rem sine specie materiali intelligens, esse immateriale debeat; sicuti phantasia ex eo materialis arguitur, quod materiali specie utatur. Ac utrum quidem etiam intellectus speciebus phantasia perceptis, tanquam gradibus, ut ratiocinando assensumur eis, que deinceps sine speciebus phantasmative intelligit, sed hoc ipsum est quod ultra omnem speciem materiam se excedunt, quidamque ejus nullum habent phantasia potius, ut . . ."

operations, whereby the mind understands itself and its own faculties, and is conscious that it is exercising such acts. And this faculty is superior to any that a material substance possesses; for no body can act reflexly on itself, but must move from one place to another.<sup>1</sup> Our observation, therefore, of our own imaginings, must be by a power superior to imagination itself; for imagination is employed on the image, not on the perception of the image, since there is no image of the act of perception.

21. The intellect also not only forms universal ideas, but perceives the nature of universality. And this seems peculiar to mankind; for brutes do not show any thing more than a power of association by resemblance. In our own conception of an universal, it may be urged, there is always some admixture of singularity, as of a particular form, magnitude, or color; yet we are able, Gassendi thinks, to strip the image successively of all these particular adjuncts.<sup>2</sup> He seems therefore, as has been remarked above, to have held the conceptualist theory in the strictest manner, admitting the reality of universal ideas even as images present to the mind.

22. Intellection being the proper operation of the soul, it is needless to inquire whether it does this by its own nature, or by a peculiar faculty called understanding; nor should we trouble ourselves about the Aristotelian distinction of the active and passive intellect.<sup>3</sup>

We have only to distinguish this intellection from mere conception derived from the phantasy, which is necessarily associated with it. We cannot conceive God in this life, except under some image thus supplied; and it is the same with all other incorporeal things. Nor do we comprehend infinite quantities, but have a sort of confused image of indefinite extension. This is surely a right account of the matter; and, if Stewart had paid any attention to these and several other passages, he could not have so much misconceived the philosophy of Gassendi.

<sup>1</sup> "Alterum est genus reflexarum actionum, quibus intellectus seipsum, suasque functiones intelligit, ac speculatur se intelligere animadvertit. Videlicet hoc munus est omni facultate corporea superius; quoniam quicquid corporeum est, ita certo loco, sive permanentem, sive succedenter alligatum est, ut non versus se, sed solum versus aliud diversum a se procedere possit."

<sup>2</sup> "Et ne inest in nobis quoque, dum universale concipimus, admisceri semper aliquid singularitatis, ut certe magnitudinis, certae figurae, certi coloris, &c., ex perimur tamen, nisi [sic] simul, saltem successive spoliari a nobis naturam qualibet specialis magnitudinis, qualibet specialis figurae, qualibet specialis coloris; atque ita ceteris."

<sup>3</sup> P. 440.

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23. 'The mind, as long as it dwells in the body, seems to have no intelligible species, except phantasms derived from sense. These he takes for impressions on the brain, driven to and fro by the animal spirits till they reach the *phantasia*, or imaginative faculty, and cause it to imagine sensible things. The soul, in Gassendi's theory, consists of an incorporeal part or intellect, and of a corporeal part, the phantasy or sensitive soul, which he conceives to be diffused throughout the body. The intellectual soul instantly perceives, by its union with the phantasy, the images impressed upon the latter, not by impulse of these sensible and material species, but by intuition of their images in the phantasy.<sup>1</sup> Thus, if I rightly apprehend his meaning, we are to distinguish,—first, the species in the brain, derived from immediate sense or reminiscence; secondly, the image of these conceived by the phantasy; thirdly, the act of perception in the mind itself, by which it knows the phantasy to have imagined these species, and knows also the species themselves to have, or to have had, their external archetypes. This distinction of the *animus*, or reasonable, from the *anima*, or sensitive soul, he took, as he did a great part of his philosophy, from Epictetus.

24. The phantasy and intellect proceed together, so that they might appear at first to be the same faculty. Not only, however, are they different in their operation even as to objects which fall under the senses, and are represented to the mind; but the intellect has certain operations peculiar to itself. Such is the apprehension of things which cannot be perceived by sense, as the Deity, whom, though we can only imagine as corporeal, we apprehend or understand to be otherwise.<sup>2</sup> He repeats a good deal of what he had before said on the distinctive province of the understanding, by which we reason on things incapable of being imagined; drawing several instances from the geometry of infinites, as in asymptotes, wherein, he says, something is always inferred by reasoning,

<sup>1</sup> "Eodem momento intellectus ob intuitum sui presentiam coherentiamque cum phantasia rem eandem contuetur."—P. 450.

<sup>2</sup> "Hoc est autem præter phantasiam creator, intellectusque ipseus proprium, potestque adeo talis apprehensio non jam imaginatio, sed intelligentia vel intellectio dici. Non quod intellectus non accipiat sensum ab ipsa phantasia ratiocinandi esse

aliquid ultra id, quod specie imaginæ representatur, neque non simul comitantem talem speciem vel imaginationem habeat: sed quod apprehendat, intelligatque aliquid, ad quod apprehendendum sive percipiendum assurgere phantasia non possit, ut quæ analogo terminetur ad corporum speciem, seu imaginem, ex qua illius operatio imaginatio appellatur."—Ibid.



which we presume to be true, and yet cannot reach by any effort of the imagination.<sup>1</sup>

25. I have given a few extracts from Gassendi in order to confirm what has been said; his writings being little read in England, and his philosophy not having been always represented in the same manner. Degerando has claimed, on two occasions, the priority for Gassendi in that theory of the generation of ideas which has usually been ascribed to Locke.<sup>2</sup> But Stewart protests against this alleged similarity in the tenets of the French and English philosophers. "The remark," he says, "is certainly just, if restrained to Locke's doctrine as interpreted by the greater part of philosophers on the Continent; but it is very wide of the truth, if applied to it as now explained and modified by the most intelligent of his disciples in this country. The main scope, indeed, of Gassendi's argument against Descartes is to materialize that class of our ideas which the Lockists as well as the Cartesians consider as the exclusive objects of the power of *reflection*, and to show that these ideas are all ultimately resolvable into images or conceptions borrowed from things external. It is not, therefore, what is sound and valuable in this part of Locke's system, but the errors grafted on it in the comments of some of his followers, that can justly be said to have been borrowed from Gassendi. Nor has Gassendi the merit of originality even in these errors; for scarcely a remark on the subject occurs in his

<sup>1</sup> "In quibus semper aliquid argumentando colligitur, quod et verum esse intelligentis et imaginando non assequimur tamen."

[Bernier well and clearly expressed the important distinction between *aliquid* and *totum*, which separates the two schools of philosophy; and thus places Gassendi far apart from Hobbes. The passage, however, which I shall give in French, cannot be more decisive than the Latin sentence just quoted. "Il ne faut pas confondre l'imagination, ou pour parler ainsi, l'Intelligence intuitive, ou directe, et qui se fait par l'application seule de l'entendement aux phantômes ou idées de la phantaisie, avec l'Intelligence pure que nous avons par le raisonnement, et que nous tirons par conséquence. D'où vient que ceux qui se persuadent qu'il n'y a aucune substance incorporelle, parce qu'ils ne concevoient rien que dans une espèce ou image corporelle, se trompent en ce qu'ils ne reconnoissent pas qu'il y a une sorte d'in-

telligence qui n'est pas imagination, à savoir celle par laquelle nous connoissons par raisonnement qu'il y a quelque chose outre ce qui tombe sous l'imagination." — *Abrogé du Système de Gassendi*, vol. iii. p. 14. Gassendi plainly confines ideas to phantasy or imagination, and so far differs from Locke. — 1847.]

<sup>2</sup> *Histoire comparée des Systèmes*, 1804, vol. i. p. 301; and *Biogr. Universelle*, art. "Gassendi." Yet in neither of these does M. Degerando advert expressly to the peculiar resemblance between the systems of Gassendi and Locke, in the account they give of ideas of reflection. He refers, however, to a more particular essay of his own on the Gassendian philosophy, which I have not seen. As to Locke's positive obligations to his predecessor, I should be perhaps inclined to doubt whether he, who was no great lover of large books, had read so unwieldy a work as the *Synagoga Philosophicum*; but the abridgement of Bernier would have sufficed.

The philosophy mis-  
understood  
by Stewart.



works, but what is copied from the accounts transmitted to us of the Epicurean metaphysics."<sup>1</sup>

26. It will probably appear to those who consider what I have quoted from Gassendi, that in his latest writings he did not differ so much from Locke, and lead the way so much to the school of the French metaphysicians of the eighteenth century, as Stewart has supposed. The resemblance to the Essay on the Human Understanding in several points, especially in the important distinction of what Locke has called ideas of reflection from those of sense, is too evident to be denied. I am at the same time unable to account in a satisfactory manner for the apparent discrepancy between the language of Gassendi in the *Syntagma Philosophicum*, and that which we find in his objections to the *Meditations* of Descartes. No great interval of time had intervened between the two works: for his correspondence with Descartes bears date in 1641; and it appears by that with Louis, Count of Angoulême, in the succeeding year, that he was already employed on the first part of the *Syntagma Philosophicum*.<sup>2</sup> Whether he urged some of his objections against the Cartesian metaphysics with a regard to victory rather than truth, or, as would be the more candid and perhaps more reasonable hypothesis, he was induced by the acuteness of his great antagonist to review and reform his own opinions, I must leave to the philosophical reader.<sup>3</sup>

27. Stewart had evidently little or no knowledge of the *Syntagma Philosophicum*. But he had seen an *Abridgment of the Philosophy of Gassendi* by Bernier, published at Lyons in 1678, and, finding in this the doctrine of Locke on ideas of reflection, conceived that it did not faithfully represent its own original. But this was hardly a very plausible conjecture; Bernier being a man of considerable ability, an intimate friend of Gassendi, and his epitome being so far from concise that it extends to eight

Bernier's  
epitome of  
Gassendi.

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary Dissertation to Encyclopædia.

<sup>2</sup> Gassendi Opera, vol. vi. p. 120. These letters are interesting to those who would study the philosophy of Gassendi.

<sup>3</sup> Baillet, in his Life of Descartes, would lead us to think that Gassendi was too much influenced by personal motives in writing against Descartes, who had mentioned the phenomena of parhelia, without alluding to a dissertation of Gassendi on the subject. The latter, it seems, owns up

a letter to Rivet, that he should not have examined so closely the metaphysics of Descartes, if he had been treated by him with as much politeness as he had expected. Vie de Descartes, liv. vi. The retort of Descartes, "O Caro!" (see vol. iii. of this work, p. 86) offended Gassendi, and caused a coldness; which, according to Baillet, Sorbiere aggravated, acting a treacherous part in exasperating the mind of Gassendi.

small volumes. Having not indeed collated the two books, but read them within a short interval of time, I can say that Bernier has given a faithful account of the philosophy of Gassendi, as it is contained in the *Syntagma Philosophicum*, — for he takes notice of no other work; nor has he here added any thing of his own. But in 1682 he published another little book, entitled *Doutes de M. Bernier sur quelques uns des principaux Chapitres de son Abrégé de la Philosophie de Gassendi*. One of these doubts relates to the existence of space; and in another place he denies the reality of eternity or abstract duration. Bernier observes, as Descartes had done, that it is vain and even dangerous to attempt a definition of evident things, such as motion, because we are apt to mistake a definition of the word for one of the thing; and philosophers seem to conceive that motion is a real being, when they talk of a billiard-ball communicating or losing it.<sup>1</sup>

28. The Cartesian philosophy, which its adversaries had expected to expire with its founder, spread more and more after his death; nor had it ever depended on any personal favor or popularity of Descartes, since he did not possess such except with a few friends. The churches and schools of Holland were full of Cartesians. The old scholastic philosophy became ridiculous: its distinctions, its maxims, were laughed at, as its adherents complain; and probably a more fatal blow was given to the Aristotelian system by Descartes than even by Bacon. The Cartesian theories were obnoxious to the rigid class of theologians; but two parties of considerable importance in Holland, the Arminians and the Coccejans, generally espoused the new philosophy. Many speculations in theology were immediately connected with it, and it acted on the free and scrutinizing spirit which began to sap the bulwarks of established orthodoxy. The Cartesians were denounced in ecclesiastical synods, and were hardly admitted to any office in the church. They were condemned by several universities, and especially by that of Leyden in 1678,<sup>2</sup> for the position that the truth of Scripture

<sup>1</sup> Even Gassendi has defined duration "an incorporeal flowing extension," which is a good instance of the success that can attend such definitions of simple ideas.

[Though this is not a proper definition of duration, it is, perhaps, not ill expressed as an analogy. — 1847.]

<sup>2</sup> Leyden had condemned the whole Cartesian system as early as 1661, on the

ground that it was an innovation on the Aristotelian philosophy so long received; and ordained, — "ut in Academia latus Aristotelicæ philosophiæ limitet, quæ hactenus recepta fuit, nos continuamus, utque in posteram nec philosophiæ, neque nominis Cartesiani in disputationibus lectionibus aut publicis aliis exercitiis, usque pro nec contra mentio fiat." Utrecht is

must be proved by reason. Nor were they less exposed to persecution in France.<sup>1</sup>

29. The Cartesian philosophy, in one sense, carried in itself the seeds of its own decline; it was the Scylla of many dogs; it taught men to think for themselves, and to think often better than Descartes had done. A new eclectic philosophy, or rather the genuine spirit of free inquiry, made Cartesianism cense as a sect, though it left much that had been introduced by it. We owe thanks to these Cartesians of the seventeenth century for their strenuous assertion of reason against prescriptive authority: the latter part of this age was signalized by the overthrow of a despotism which had fought every inch in its retreat; and it was manifestly after a struggle, on the Continent, with this new philosophy, that it was ultimately vanquished.<sup>2</sup>

30. The Cartesian writers of France, the Low Countries, and Germany, were numerous and respectable. La Forge; Forge of Saumur first developed the theory of occasional causes to explain the union of soul and body, wherein he was followed by Geulinx, Regis, Wittich, and Malebranche.<sup>3</sup> But this and other innovations displeased the stricter Cartesians, who did not find them in their master. Clauberg in Germany, Clerselier in France, Le Grand in the Low Countries, should be mentioned among the leaders of the school. But no one has left so comprehensive a statement and defence of Cartesianism as Jean Silvain Regis, whose

1644, had gone farther; and her doctores in couched in terms which might have been used by any one who wished to ridicule university prejudice by a forgery. "Re-  
*Jece novam istam philosophiam, primo quia veteri philosophiæ, quam Academia toto orbi terrarum hactenus optimo consilio docere, adversatur, ejusque fundamenta subvertit; deinde quia juventutem a veteri et sana philosophia avertit, impeditque quo minus ad culmen eruditionis perveniat; eo quod istius presumptæ philosophiæ adminiculo technologicæ in univ. libris professorumque lectionibus et disputationibus usitata, percipere sequitur; postremo quod ex eadem varias alie et absurde opiniones partim conduntur, partim ab improvida juventute deducuntur possunt pugnantes cum crebris disciplinæ et sacralibus, atque imprimis cum orthodoxa theologia; censere igitur et statuere omnes philosophiam in hac Academia docendam imposturam a tali instituto et scripto abstinere debere, contentos modica libertate dissentendi in singularibus non*

*nullis opinionibus ad aliarum celeberrimæ Academicarum exemplum hic usitata, ita ut veteris et receptæ philosophiæ fundamenta non labefactent.*" — Tepel. Hist. Philos. Cartesianæ, p. 75.

<sup>1</sup> An account of the manner in which the Cartesians were harassed through the Jesuits is given by M. Cousin in the *Journal des Savans*, March, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> For the fate of the Cartesian philosophy in the life of its founder, see the life of Descartes by Baillet, 2 vols. in quarto, which he afterwards abridged in 12mo. After the death of Descartes, it may be best traced by means of Brucker. Hulse, as usual, is a mere copyist of his predecessor. He has, however, given a fuller account of Regis. A contemporary history of Cartesian Philosophy by Tepel contains rather a neatly written summary of the controversies it excited, both in the lifetime of Descartes and for a few years afterwards.

<sup>3</sup> Tennemann (*Manuel de la Philosophie*, li. 38) ascribes this theory to Geulinx. See also Brucker, t. 704.

Systeme de la Philosophie, in three quarto volumes, appeared at Paris in 1690. It is divided into four parts, on Logic, Metaphysics, Physics, and Ethics. In the three latter, Regis claims nothing as his own, except some explanations: "All that I have said being due to M. Descartes, whose method and principles I have followed, even in explanations that are different from his own." And in his Logic he professes to have gone little beyond the author of the *Art de Penser*.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding this rare modesty, Regis is not a writer unworthy of being consulted by the studios of philosophy, nor deficient in clearer and fuller statements than will always be found in Descartes. It might even be said, that he has many things which would be sought in vain through his master's writings, though I am unable to prove that they might not be traced in those of the intermediate Cartesians. Though our limits will not permit any further account of Regis, I will give a few passages in a note.<sup>2</sup>

31. Huet, Bishop of Avranches, a man of more general erudition than philosophical acuteness, yet not quite without this, arraigned the whole theory in his *Censura Philosophiæ Cartesianæ*. He had been for many years, as he tells us, a favorer of Cartesianism; but his

Huet's Censure of Cartesianism.

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that Regis says nothing about figures and modes of syllogism: "Nous ne dirons rien des figures ni des syllogismes en général; car bien que tout cela puisse servir de quelque chose pour la spéculation de la logique, il n'est au moins d'aucun usage pour la pratique, laquelle est l'unique but que nous nous sommes proposé dans ce traité."—p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Regis, in imitation of his master, and perhaps with more clearness, observes that our knowledge of our own existence is not derived from reasoning, "mais par une connaissance simple et intérieure, qui précède toutes les connaissances acquises, et que j'appelle *conscience*. En effet, quand je dis que je connais ou que je crois connaître, ce je suppose moi-même mon existence, étant impossible que je connaisse, ou seulement que je crois connaître, et que je ne sois pas quelque chose d'existant."—p. 68. The Cartesian paradox, as it at first appears, that thinking is the essence of the soul, Regis has explained away. After coming to the conclusion, "Je suis donc une pensée," he immediately corrects himself: "Cependant je crains encore de me définir mal, quand je dis que je suis une pensée, qui a la propriété de douter et d'avoir de la certitude; car quelle apparence y a-t-il que ma nature, qui doit être

une chose fixe et permanente, consiste dans la pensée, puisque je sais par expérience que mes pensées sont dans un flux continu, et que je ne pense jamais à la même chose deux moments de suite; mais quand je considère la difficulté de plus près, je conçois aisément qu'elle vient de ce que le mot de *pensée* est équivoque, et que je m'en sers indifféremment pour signifier la pensée qui constitue ma nature, et pour désigner les différentes manières d'être de cette pensée; ce qui est un erreur extrême, car il y a cette différence entre la pensée qui constitue ma nature, et les pensées qui n'en sont que les manières d'être, que la première est une pensée fixe et permanente, et que les autres sont des pensées changeantes et passagères. C'est pourquoi, afin de donner une idée exacte de ma nature, je dis que je suis une pensée qui existe en elle-même, et qui est le sujet de toutes ses manières de penser. Je dis que je suis une pensée pour marquer ce que la pensée qui constitue ma nature a de commun avec la pensée en général qui comprend sous sa toutes les manières particulières de penser; et j'ajoute, qui existe en elle-même, et qui est le sujet de différentes manières de penser, pour désigner ce que cette pensée a de particulier qui la distingue de



retraction is very complete. It cannot be denied, that Huet strikes well at the vulnerable parts of the Cartesian metaphysics, and exposes their alternate scepticism and dogmatism with some justice. In other respects he displays an inferior knowledge of the human mind and of the principles of reasoning to Descartes. He repeats Gassendi's cavil, that "Cogito, ergo sum," involves the truth of "Quod cogitat, est." The Cartesians, Huet observes, assert the major, or universal, to be deduced from the minor; which, though true in things known by induction, is not so in propositions necessarily known, or as the schools say, *à priori*, as that the whole is greater than its part. It is not, however, probable that Descartes would have extended his reply to Gassendi's criticism so far as this: some have referred our knowledge of geometrical axioms to mere experience, but this seems not agreeable to the Cartesian theory.

32. The influence of the Cartesian philosophy was displayed in a treatise of deserved reputation, *L'Art de Penser*, often called the Port-Royal Logic. It seems to have been the work of Antony Arnauld, with some assistance, perhaps, by Nicole. Arnauld was not an entire Cartesian; he had himself been engaged in controversy with Descartes; but his understanding was clear and calm, his love of truth sincere, and he could not avoid recognizing the vast

la pensée en général, vu qu'elle n'existe que dans l'entendement de celui qui la conçoit ainsi que toutes les autres natures universelles."—p. 70.

Every mode supposes a substance wherein it exists. From this axiom, Regis deduces the objective being of space, because we have the ideas of length, breadth, and depth, which cannot belong to ourselves, our souls having none of these properties; nor could the ideas be suggested by a superior being, if space did not exist, because they would be the representations of nonentity, which is impossible. But this transcendental proof is too subtle for the world.

It is an axiom of Regis, that we only know things without us by means of ideas, and that things of which we have no ideas are in regard to us as if they did not exist at all. Another axiom is, that all ideas, considered in respect to their representative property, depend on objects as their types, or *causes exemplaires*. And a third, that the *cause exemplaire* of ideas must contain all the properties which the ideas represent. These axioms, ac-

ording to him, are the bases of all certainty in physical truth. From the second axiom he deduces the objectivity or *cause exemplaire* of his idea of a perfect being; and his proof seems at least more clearly put than by Descartes. Every idea implies an objective reality; for otherwise there would be an effect without a cause. Yet in this we have the sophisms and begging of questions of which we may see many instances in Spinoza.

In the second part of the first book of his metaphysics, Regis treats of the union of soul and body, and concludes that the motions of the body only act on the soul by a special will of God, who has determined to produce certain thoughts simultaneously with certain bodily motions—p. 124. God is the efficient first cause of all effects; his creatures are but secondarily efficient. But, as they act immediately, we may ascribe all motion being to the efficiency of second causes. And he prefers this expression to that of occasional causes, usual among the Cartesians, because he fancies the latter rather derogatory to the fixed will of God.



superiority of the new philosophy to that received in the schools. This logic, accordingly, is perhaps the first regular treatise on that science that contained a protestation, though in very moderate language, against the Aristotelian method. The author tells us, that, after some doubt, he had resolved to insert a few things rather troublesome and of little value, such as the rules of conversion and the demonstration of the syllogistic figures, chiefly as exercises of the understanding, for which difficulties are not without utility. The method of syllogism itself he deems little serviceable in the discovery of truth; while many things dwelt upon in books of logic, such as the ten categories, rather injure than improve the reasoning faculties, because they accustom men to satisfy themselves with words, and to mistake a long catalogue of arbitrary definitions for real knowledge. Of Aristotle he speaks in more honorable terms than Bacon had done before, or than Malebranche did afterwards; acknowledging the extraordinary merit of some of his writings, but pointing out with an independent spirit his failings as a master in the art of reasoning.

33. The first part of *L'Art de Penser* is almost entirely metaphysical, in the usual sense of that word. It considers ideas in their nature and origin, in the chief differences of the objects they represent, in their simplicity or composition, in their extent, as universal, particular, or singular; and, lastly, in their distinctness or confusion. The word "idea," it is observed, is among those which are so clear that we cannot explain them by means of others, because none can be more clear and simple than themselves.<sup>1</sup> But here it may be doubtful whether the sense in which the word is to be taken must strike every one in the same way. The clearness of a word does not depend on its association with a distinct conception in our own minds, but on the generality of this same association in the minds of others.

34. No follower of Descartes has more unambiguously than this author distinguished between imagination and intellection, though he gives the name of idea to both. Many suppose, he says, that they cannot conceive a thing when they cannot imagine it. But we cannot imagine a figure of 1,000 sides, though we can conceive it and reason upon it. We may, indeed, get a confused image of a figure with many sides; but

<sup>1</sup> C. 1.

these are no more 1,000 than they are 999. Thus also we have ideas of thinking, affirming, denying, and the like, though we have no imagination of these operations. By ideas, therefore, we mean, not images painted in the fancy, but all that is in our minds when we say that we conceive any thing, in whatever manner we may conceive it. Hence it is easy to judge of the falsehood of some opinions held in this age. One philosopher has advanced, that we have no idea of God; another, that all reasoning is but an assemblage of words connected by an affirmation. He glances here at Gassendi and Hobbes.<sup>1</sup> Far from all our ideas coming from the senses, as the Aristotelians have said, and as Gassendi asserts in his *Logic*, we may say, on the contrary, that no idea in our minds is derived from the senses except occasionally (*par occasion*); that is, the movements of the brain, which is all that the organs of sense can affect, give occasion to the soul to form different ideas which it would not otherwise form, though these ideas have scarce ever any resemblance to what occurs in the organs of sense and in the brain, and though there are also very many ideas, which, deriving nothing from any bodily image, cannot without absurdity be referred to the senses.<sup>2</sup> This is perhaps a clearer statement of an important truth than will be found in Malebranche, or in Descartes himself.

35. In the second part, Arnauld treats of words and propositions. Much of it may be reckoned more within the province of grammar than of logic. But as it is inconvenient to refer the student to works of a different class, especially if it should be the case that no good grammars, written with a regard to logical principles, were then to be found, this cannot justly be made an objection. In the latter chapters of this second part, he comes to much that is strictly logical, and taken from ordinary books on that science. The third part relates to syllogisms; and notwithstanding the author's low estimation of that method, in comparison with the general regard for it in the schools, he has not omitted the common explanations of mood and figure, ending with a concise but good account of the chief sophisms.

36. The fourth and last part is entitled, *On Method*, and

<sup>1</sup> The reflection on Gassendi is a mere cavil, as will appear by remarking what he has really said, and which we have quoted a few pages above. The Cartesians were evasive in using one sense of the word

"idea," while Gassendi used another. He

had himself been to blame in this controversy with the father of the new philosophy, and the disciples (calling the author of *L'Art de Penser* such in a general sense) retaliated by equal captiousness.

<sup>2</sup> C. I.

contains the principles of connected reasoning, which he justly observes to be more important than the rules of single syllogisms, wherein few make any mistake. The laws of demonstration given by Pascal are here laid down with some enlargement. Many observations not wholly bearing on merely logical proof are found in this part of the treatise.

37. The Port-Royal Logic, though not perhaps very much read in England, has always been reckoned among the best works in that science, and certainly had a great influence in rendering it more metaphysical, more ethical (for much is said by Arnauld on the moral discipline of the mind in order to fit it for the investigation of truth), more exempt from technical barbarisms, and trifling definitions and divisions. It became more and more acknowledged, that the rules of syllogism go a very little way in rendering the mind able to follow a course of inquiry without error, much less in assisting it to discover truth; and that even their vaunted prerogative of securing us from fallacy is nearly ineffectual in exercise. The substitution of the French language, in its highest polish, for the uncouth Latinity of the Aristotelians, was another advantage of which the Cartesian school legitimately availed themselves.

38. Malebranche, whose *Recherche de la Vérité* was published in 1674, was a warm and almost enthusiastic admirer of Descartes; but his mind was independent, searching, and fond of its own inventions: he acknowledged no master, and in some points dissents from the Cartesian school. His natural temperament was sincere and rigid: he judges the moral and intellectual failings of mankind with a severe scrutiny, and a contemptuousness not generally unjust in itself, but displaying too great confidence in his own superiority. This was enhanced by a religious mysticism, which enters, as an essential element, into his philosophy of the mind. The fame of Malebranche, and still more the popularity in modern times of his *Search for Truth*, has been affected by that peculiar hypothesis, so mystically expressed, the seeing all things in God, which has been more remembered than any other part of that treatise. "The union," he says, "of the soul to God is the only means by which we acquire a knowledge of truth. This union has indeed been rendered so obscure by original sin, that few can understand what it means: to those who follow blindly the dictates of sense and passion, it appears

imaginary. The same cause has so fortified the connection between the soul and body, that we look on them as one substance, of which the latter is the principal part. And hence we may all fear, that we do not well discern the confused sounds with which the senses fill the imagination from that pure voice of truth which speaks to the soul. The body speaks louder than God himself; and our pride makes us presumptuous enough to judge without waiting for those words of truth, without which we cannot truly judge at all. And the present work," he adds, "may give evidence of this; for it is not published as being infallible. But let my readers judge of my opinions according to the clear and distinct answers they shall receive from the only Lord of all men, after they shall have interrogated him by paying a serious attention to the subject." This is a strong evidence of the enthusiastic confidence in supernatural illumination which belongs to Malebranche, and which we are almost surprised to find united with so much cool and acute reasoning as his writings contain.

39. The *Recherche de la Vérité* is in six books; the first five on the errors springing from the senses, from the imagination, from the understanding, from the na- <sup>His style</sup> tural inclinations, and from the passions. The sixth contains the method of avoiding these, which, however, has been anticipated in great measure throughout the preceding. Malebranche has many repetitions, but little, I think, that can be called digressive; though he takes a large range of illustration, and dwells rather diffusely on topics of subordinate importance. His style is admirable; clear, precise, elegant; sparing in metaphors, yet not wanting them in due place; warm, and sometimes eloquent; a little redundant, but never passionate or declamatory.

40. Error, according to Malebranche, is the source of all human misery: man is miserable because he is a <sup>Sketch of his theory</sup> sinner, and he would not sin if he did not consent to err. For the will alone judges and reasons, the understanding only perceives things and their relations, — a deviation from common language, to say the least, that seems quite unnecessary.<sup>1</sup> The will is active and free; not that we can avoid willing our own happiness; but it possesses a power of turning the understanding towards such objects as please us,

<sup>1</sup> L. l. c. 2



and commanding it to examine every thing thoroughly, else we should be perpetually deceived, and without remedy, by the appearances of truth. And this liberty we should use on every occasion: it is to become slaves, against the will of God, when we acquiesce in false appearances; but it is in obedience to the voice of eternal truth which speaks within us, that we submit to those secret reproaches of reason, which accompany our refusal to yield to evidence. There are, therefore, two fundamental rules, — one for science, the other for morals: never to give an entire consent to any propositions, except those which are so evidently true that we cannot refuse to admit them without an internal uneasiness and reproach of our reason; and never fully to love any thing which we can abstain from loving without remorse. We may feel a great inclination to consent absolutely to a probable opinion; yet, on reflection, we shall find that we are not compelled to do so by any tacit self-reproach if we do not. And we ought to consent to such probable opinions for the time until we have more fully examined the question.

41. The sight is the noblest of our senses; and, if they had been given us to discover truth, it is through vision that we should have done it. But it deceives us in all that it represents; in the size of bodies, their figures and motions, in light and colors. None of these are such as they appear, as he proves by many obvious instances. Thus we measure the velocity of motion by duration of time, and extent of space; but of duration the mind can form no just estimate, and the eye cannot determine equality of spaces. The diameter of the moon is greater by measurement when she is high in the heavens: it appears greater to our eyes in the horizon.<sup>1</sup> On all sides we are beset with error through our senses. Not that the sensations themselves, properly speaking, deceive us. We are not deceived in supposing that we see an orb of light before the sun has risen above the horizon, but in supposing that what we see is the sun itself. Were we even delirious, we should see and feel what our senses present to us, though our judgment as to its reality would be erroneous. And this judgment we may withhold by assenting to nothing without perfect certainty.

42. It would have been impossible for a man endowed with

<sup>1</sup> L. I. c. 9. Malebranche was engaged afterwards in a controversy with Regis on this particular question of the horizontal moon.

such intrepidity and acuteness as Malebranche to overlook the question, so naturally raised by this sceptical theory, as to the objective existence of an external world. There is no necessary connection, he observes, between the presence of an idea in the soul, and the existence of the thing which it represents; as dreams and delirium prove. Yet we may be confident, that extension, figure, and movement do generally exist without us when we perceive them. These are not imaginary: we are not deceived in believing their reality, though it is very difficult to prove it. But it is far otherwise with colors, smells, or sounds; for these do not exist at all beyond the mind. This he proceeds to show at considerable length.<sup>1</sup> In one of the illustrations subsequently written in order to obviate objections, and subjoined to the *Recherche de la Vérité*, Malebranche comes again to this problem of the reality of matter, and concludes by subverting every argument in its favor, except what he takes to be the assertion of Scripture. Berkeley, who did not see this in the same light, had scarcely a step to take in his own famous theory, which we may consider as having been anticipated by Malebranche, with the important exception that what was only scepticism, and denial of certainty, in the one, became a positive and dogmatic affirmation in the other.

43. In all our sensations, he proceeds to show, there are four things distinct in themselves, but which, examined as they arise simultaneously, we are apt to confound: these are the action of the object, the effect upon the organ of sense, the mere sensation, and the judgment we form as to its cause. We fall into errors as to all these, confounding the sensation with the action of bodies, as when we say there is heat in the fire, or color in the rose; or confounding the motion of the nerves with sensation, as when we refer heat to the hand; but most of all, in drawing mistaken inferences as to the nature of objects from our sensations.<sup>2</sup> It may be here remarked, that what Malebranche has properly called the judgment of the mind as to the cause of its sensations, is precisely what Reid denominates perception; a term less clear, and which seems to have led some of his school into important errors. The language of the Scottish philosopher appears to imply that he considered perception as a distinct and original faculty of the mind, rather than what it is, — a complex operation of the judg-

<sup>1</sup> L. L. c. 19.

<sup>2</sup> C. 12.

ment and memory, applying knowledge already acquired by experience. Neither he, nor his disciple Stewart, though aware of the mistakes that have arisen in this province of metaphysics by selecting our instances from the phenomena of vision instead of the other senses, have avoided the same source of error. The sense of sight has the prerogative of enabling us to pronounce instantly on the external cause of our sensation; and this perception is so intimately blended with the sensation itself, that it does not imply in our minds, whatever may be the case with young children, the least consciousness of a judgment. But we need only make our experiment upon sound or smell, and we shall at once acknowledge that there is no sort of necessary connection between the sensation and our knowledge of its corresponding external object. We hear sounds continually which we are incapable of referring to any particular body; nor does any one, I suppose, deny that it is by experience alone we learn to pronounce, with more or less of certainty according to its degree, on the causes from which these sensations proceed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [The word "perception" has not, in this passage, been used in its most approved sense; but the language of philosophers is not uniform. Locke often confounds perception with sensation, so as to employ the words indifferently. But this is not the case when he writes with attention. "The ideas," he says, "we receive from sensation are often in grown people, altered by the judgment without our taking notice of it;" instancing a globe, "of which the idea imprinted in our own mind is of a flat circle variously shadowed; but we, having been by use accustomed to perceive what kind of appearance convex bodies are wont to make in us, what alterations are made in the reflections of light by the difference of the sensible figures of bodies, the judgment presently, by an habitual custom, alters the appearance of things into their causes" so that, from that which truly is variety of shadow or color, collecting the figure, it makes it pass for a mark of a figure, and frames to itself the perception of a convex figure and so on. "There is no reasoning in perception. There is no reasoning in it is the effect of belief which is implied in it is the effect of instinct."—Chap. vi. § 20. But, in fact, he limits the strict province of perception to the primary qualities of matter, and in

is the effect of sensation; but Locke extends the word, in this passage at least, to much of which mere sensation has only furnished the materials, to the inferences derived from experience. Later metaphysicians limit more essentially the use of the word. "La perception," says M. de Remusat, "dans sa plus grande complaisance, n'est que la distinction mentale de l'objet de la sensation."—*Éléments de Philosophie*, vol. ii. p. 372. Kant, with his usual acuteness of discrimination, analyzes the process. We have, first, the phenomena, or appearance of the object, under which he comprehends the impression made on the organ of sense; secondly, the sensation itself; thirdly, the representation of the object by the mind; fourthly, the reference of this representation to the object. And there may be, but not necessarily, the conception or knowledge of what the object is. *Id.*, vol. i. p. 270. Locke sometimes seems to use the word "perception" for the third of these; thirdly, the inquiry into the first work. Indeed, he expressly distinguishes perception from "that knowledge of the objects of sense, which is got by reasoning. There is no reasoning in perception. The objects of sense, which is got by reasoning, belief which is implied in it is the effect of instinct."—Chap. vi. § 20. But, in fact, he limits the strict province of perception to the primary qualities of matter, and in

44. Sensation he defines to be "a modification of the soul in relation to something which passes in the body to which she is united." These sensations we know by experience; it is idle to go about defining or explaining them; this cannot be done by words. It is an error, according to Malebranche, to believe that all men have like sensations from the same objects. In this he goes farther than Pascal, who thinks it probable that they have; while Malebranche holds it indubitable, from the organs of men being constructed differently, that they do not receive similar impressions, instancing music, some smells and flavors, and many other things of the same kind. But it is obvious to reply, that he has argued from the exception to the rule; the great majority of mankind agreeing as to musical sounds (which is the strongest case that can be put against his paradox) and most other sensations. That the sensations of different men, subject to such exceptions, if not strictly alike, are, so to say, in a constant ratio, seems as indisputable as any conclusion we can draw from their testimony.

45. The second book of Malebranche's treatise relates to the imagination, and the errors connected with it. "The imagination consists in the power of the mind to form images of objects by producing a change in the fibres of that part of the brain, which may be called principal because it corresponds with all parts of the body, and is the place where the soul, if we may so speak, immediately resides." This he supposes to be where all the filaments of the brain terminate; so difficult was it, especially in that age, for a philosopher who

the idea of space. Both Locke and Reid, however, sometimes extend it to the conception or knowledge of the actual object. We have just quoted a passage from Locke. "In two of our senses," says Reid, "touch and taste, there must be an immediate application of the object to the organ; in the other three, the object is *perceived* at a distance, but still by means of a medium by which some impression is made upon the organ." — *Intellect. Powers*, Essay II. ch. II. But perception of the object, through the organs of sound, smell, and taste, must of necessity imply a knowledge of it derived from experience. Those senses, by themselves, give us no perception of external things. But the word has one meaning in modern philosophy, and another in popular usage, which philosophers sometimes inadvertently follow. In the first it is a mere reference of the sensation to some external object, more definite in sight, somewhat less so in touch, and

not at all in the three other senses. In the other it is a reference of the sensation to a known object, and in all the senses: we *perceive* an oak-tree, the striking of the clock, the perfume of a violet. The more philosophical sense of the word "perception" limits greatly the extent of the faculty. "We *perceive*," says Sir W. Hamilton, on the passage last quoted from Reid, "nothing but what is in relation to the organ; and nothing is in relation to the organ that is not present to it. All the senses are, in fact, modifications of touch, as Democritus of old taught. We reach the distant reality, not by senses, not by perception, but by inference." Brown had said the same. This has been, in the case of sight, controverted by Dr. Whewell; but whether we see objects, strictly speaking, at a distance, or on the contrary, is evident that we do and know that we do are, till we have been taught otherwise. — 1847.]



had the clearest perception of the soul's immateriality to free himself from the analogies of extended presence and material impulse. The imagination, he says, comprehends two things; the action of the will, and the obedience of the animal spirits which trace images on the brain. The power of conception depends partly upon the strength of those animal spirits, partly on the qualities of the brain itself. For just as the size, the depth, and the clearness of the lines in an engraving depend on the force with which the graver acts, and on the obedience which the copper yields to it, so the depth and clearness of the traces of the imagination depend on the force of the animal spirits, and on the constitution of the fibres of the brain; and it is the difference of these which occasions almost the whole of that vast inequality which we find in the capacities of men.

46. This arbitrary, though rather specious hypothesis, which, in the present more advanced state of physiology, a philosopher might not in all points reject, but would certainly not assume, is spread out by Malebranche over a large part of his work, and especially the second book. The delicacy of the fibres of the brain, he supposes, is one of the chief causes of our not giving sufficient application to difficult subjects. Women possess this delicacy, and hence have more intelligence than men as to all sensible objects; but whatever is abstract is to them incomprehensible. The fibres are soft in children, and become stronger with age, the greatest perfection of the understanding being between thirty and fifty; but with prejudiced men, and especially when they are advanced in life, the hardness of the cerebral fibre confirms them in error. For we can understand nothing without attention, nor attend to it without having a strong image in the brain; nor can that image be formed without a suppleness and susceptibility of motion in the brain itself. It is, therefore, highly useful to get the habit of thinking on all subjects, and thus to give the brain a facility of motion analogous to that of the fingers in playing on a musical instrument; and this habit is best required by seeking truth in difficult things while we are young, because it is then that the fibres are most easily bent in all directions.<sup>1</sup>

47. This hypothesis, carried so far as it has been by Malebranche, goes very great lengths in asserting not merely a

<sup>1</sup> L. II c. 2.

connection between the cerebral motions and the operations of the mind, but something like a subordination of the latter to a plastic power in the animal spirits of the brain. For if the differences in the intellectual powers of mankind, and also, as he afterwards maintains, in their moral emotions, are to be accounted for by mere bodily configuration as their regulating cause, little more than a naked individuality of consciousness seems to be left to the immaterial principle. No one, however, whether he were staggered by this difficulty or not, had a more decided conviction of the essential distinction between mind and matter than this disciple of Descartes. The soul, he says, does not become body, nor the body soul, by their union. Each substance remains as it is; the soul incapable of extension and motion, the body incapable of thought and desire. All the alliance between soul and body which is known to us consists in a natural and mutual correspondence of the thoughts of the former with the traces on the brain, and of its emotions with the traces of the animal spirits. As soon as the soul receives new ideas, new traces are imprinted on the brain; and, as soon as external objects imprint new traces, the soul receives new ideas. Not that it contemplates these traces, for it has no knowledge of them; nor that the traces contain the ideas, since they have no relation to them; nor that the soul receives her ideas from the traces, for it is inconceivable that the soul should receive any thing from the body, and become more enlightened, as some philosophers (meaning Gassendi) express it, by turning itself towards the phantasms in the brain. Thus, also, when the soul wills that the arm should move, the arm moves, though she does not even know what else is necessary for its motion; and thus, when the animal spirits are put into movement, the soul is disturbed, though she does not even know that there are animal spirits in the body.

48. These remarks of Malebranche it is important to familiarize to our minds; and those who reflect upon them will neither fall into the gross materialism to which many physiologists appear prone, nor, on the other hand, out of fear of allowing too much to the bodily organs, reject any sufficient proof that may be adduced for the relation between the cerebral system and the intellectual processes. These opposite errors are by no means uncommon in the present age. But, without expressing an opinion on that peculiar hypothesis

which is generally called phrenology, we might ask whether it is not quite as conceivable, that a certain state of portions of the brain may be the antecedent condition of memory or imagination, as that a certain state of nervous filaments may be, what we know it is, an invariable antecedent of sensation. In neither instance can there be any resemblance or proper representation of the organic motion transferred to the soul; nor ought we to employ, even in metaphor, the analogies of impulse or communication. But we have two phenomena, between which, by the constitution of our human nature, and probably by that of the very lowest animals, there is a perpetual harmony and concomitance; an ultimate fact, according to the present state of our faculties, which may in some senses be called mysterious, inasmuch as we can neither fully apprehend its final causes, nor all the conditions of its operation, but one which seems not to involve any appearance of contradiction, and should therefore not lead us into the useless perplexity of seeking a solution that is almost evidently beyond our reach.

49. The association of ideas is far more extensively developed by Malebranche in this second book than by any of the old writers, not even, I think, with the exception of Hobbes; though he is too fond of mixing the psychological facts which experience furnishes with his precarious, however plausible, theory of cerebral traces. Many of his remarks are acute and valuable. Thus he observes, that writers who make use of many new terms in science, under the notion of being more intelligible, are often not understood at all, whatever care they may take to define their words. We grant in theory their right to do this; but nature resists. The new words, having no ideas previously associated with them, fall out of the reader's mind, except in mathematics, where they can be rendered evident by diagrams. In all this part, Malebranche expatiates on the excessive deference shown to authority, which, because it is great in religion, we suppose equally conclusive in philosophy, and on the waste of time which mere reading of many books entails; experience, he says, having always shown that those who have studied most are the very persons who have led the world into the greatest errors. The whole of the chapters on this subject is worth perusal.

50. In another part of this second book, Malebranche has opened a new and fertile vein, which he is far from having

exhausted, on what he calls the contagiousness of a powerful imagination. Minds of this character, he observes, rule those which are feebler in conception: they give them by degrees their own habit, they impress their own type; and as men of strong imagination are themselves for the most part very unreasonable, their brains being cut up, as it were, by deep traces, which leave no room for any thing else, no source of human error is more dangerous than this contagiousness of their disorder. This he explains, in his favorite physiology, by a certain natural sympathy between the cerebral fibres of different men, which being wanting in any one with whom we converse, it is vain to expect that he will enter into our views, and we must look for a more sympathetic tissue elsewhere.

51. The moral observations of Malebranche are worth more than these hypotheses with which they are mingled. Men of powerful imagination express themselves with force and vivacity, though not always in the most natural manner, and often with great animation of gesture: they deal with subjects that excite sensible images; and from all this they acquire a great power of persuasion. This is exercised especially over persons in subordinate relations; and thus children, servants, or courtiers adopt the opinions of their superiors. Even in religion, nations have been found to take up the doctrines of their rulers, as has been seen in England. In certain authors, who influence our minds without any weight of argument, this despotism of a strong imagination is exercised, which he particularly illustrates by the examples of Tertullian, Seneca, and Montaigne. The contagious power of imagination is also manifest in the credulity of mankind as to apparitions and witchcraft; and he observes, that, where witches are burned, there is generally a great number of them, while, since some parliaments have ceased to punish for sorcery, the offence has diminished within their jurisdiction.

52. The application which these striking and original views will bear spreads far into the regions of moral philosophy in the largest sense of that word. It is needless to dwell upon, and idle to cavil at, the physiological theories to which Malebranche has had recourse. False let them be, what is derived from the experience of human nature will always be true. No one general phenomenon in the intercommunity of mankind with each other is more worthy to be remembered, or



more evident to an observing eye, than this contagiousness, as Malebranche phrases it, of a powerful imagination, especially when assisted by any circumstances that secure and augment its influence. The history of every popular delusion, and even the petty events of every day in private life, are witnesses to its power.

53. The third book is entitled, *Of the Understanding or Pure Spirit (l'Esprit Pur)*. By the pure understanding he means the faculty of the soul to know the reality of certain things without the aid of images in the brain. And he warns the reader that the inquiry will be found dry and obscure. The essence of the soul, he says, following his Cartesian theory, consists in thought, as that of matter does in extension; will, imagination, memory, and the like, are modifications of thought or forms of the soul, as water, wood, or fire are modifications of matter. This sort of expression has been adopted by our metaphysicians of the Scots school in preference to the ideas of reflection, as these operations are called by Locke. But by the word thought (*pensée*), Malebranche, like Regis, does not mean these modifications, but the soul or thinking principle absolutely, capable of all these modifications, as extension is neither round nor square, though capable of either form. The power of volition, and, by parity of reasoning we may add, of thinking, is inseparable from the soul, but not the acts of volition or thinking themselves; as a body is always movable, though it be not always in motion.

54. In this book it does not seem that Malebranche has been very successful in distinguishing the ideas of pure intellect from those which the senses or imagination present to us; nor do we clearly see what he means by the former, except those of existence and a few more. But he now hastens to his peculiar hypothesis as to the mode of perception. By ideas he understands the immediate object of the soul, which all the world, he supposes, will agree not to be the same with the external objects of sense. Ideas are real existences; for they have properties, and represent very different things: but nothing can have no property.<sup>1</sup> How, then, do they enter into

<sup>1</sup> [Cudworth uses the same argument for the reality of ideas. "It is a ridiculous conceit of a modern atheistic writer, that universals are nothing else but names, attributed to many singular bodies, be-

cause whatever is, is singular. For though whatever exists without the mind be singular, yet it is plain that there are conceptions in our minds objectively universal. Which universal objects of our mind

the mind, or become present to it? Is it, as the Aristotelians hold, by means of species transmitted from the external objects? Or are they produced instantaneously by some faculty of the soul? Or have they been created and posited as it were in the soul, when it began to exist? Or does God produce them in us whenever we think or perceive? Or does the soul contain in herself, in some transcendental manner, whatever is in the sensible world? These hypotheses of elder philosophers, some of which are not quite intelligibly distinct from each other, Malebranche having successfully refuted, comes to what he considers the only possible alternative; namely, that the soul is united to an all-perfect Being, in whom all that belongs to his creatures is contained. Besides the exclusion of every other supposition which he conceives himself to have given, he subjoins several direct arguments in favor of his own theory, but in general so obscure and full of arbitrary assumption that they cannot be stated in this brief sketch.<sup>1</sup>

55. The mysticism of this eminent man displays itself throughout this part of his treatise, but rarely leading him into that figurative and unmeaning language from which the inferior class of enthusiasts are never free. His philosophy, which has hitherto appeared so sceptical, assumes now the character of intense, irresistible conviction. The scepticism of Malebranche is merely ancillary to his mysticism. His philosophy, if we may use so quaint a description of it, is subjectivity leading objectivity in chains. He seems to triumph in his restoration of the inner man to his pristine greatness, by subduing those false traitors and rebels, the senses and brain, to whom, since the great lapse of Adam, his posterity had been in thrall. It has been justly remarked by Brown, that in the writings of Malebranche, as in all the theological metaphysicians of the Catholic Church, we perceive the commanding influence of Augustin.<sup>2</sup> From him,

though they exist not as such anywhere without it, yet are they not therefore nothing, but have an intelligible entity, for this very reason, because they are conceivable; for, since conceivability is not conceivable, whatever is conceivable as an object of the mind is therefore something." — Intellectual System, p. 781. — 1842.]

<sup>1</sup> L. III. c. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Philosophy of the Human Mind, Lecture XXX. Brown's own position, that 'the idea is the mind,' seems to me as

paradoxical, in expression at least, as any thing in Malebranche.

[Brown meant to guard against the notion of Berkeley and Malebranche, that ideas are any how separable from the mind, or capable of being considered as real beings. But he did not sufficiently distinguish between the perceiving and the perception, or what M. de Remusat has called, *le mini observer par le mini*. As for the word "modification," which we owe to Malebranche, though it does not well ex-

rather than; in the first instance, from Plato or Plotinus, it may be suspected that Malebranche, who was not very learned in ancient philosophy, derived the manifest tinge of Platonism, that, mingling with his warm admiration of Descartes, has rendered him a link between two famous systems. But his genius, more clear, or at least disciplined in a more accurate logic, than that of Augustin, taught him to dissent from that father by denying objective reality to eternal truths, such as that two and two are equal to four; descending thus one step from unintelligible mysticism.

56. "Let us repose," he concludes, "in this tenet, that God is the intelligible world, or the place of spirits, like as the material world is the place of bodies; that it is from his power they receive all their modifications; that it is in his wisdom they find all their ideas; and that it is by his love they feel all their well-regulated emotions. And, since his power and his wisdom and his love are but himself, let us believe with St. Paul, that he is not far from each of us, and that in him we live and move, and have our being." But sometimes Malebranche does not content himself with these fine effusions of piety. His theism, as has often been the case with mystical writers, expands till it becomes, as it were, dark with excessive light, and almost vanishes in its own effulgence. He has passages that approach very closely to the pantheism of Jordano Bruno and Spinoza; one especially, wherein he vindicates the Cartesian argument for a being of necessary existence in a strain which perhaps renders that argument less incomprehensible, but certainly cannot be said, in any legitimate sense, to establish the existence of a Deity.<sup>1</sup>

57. It is from the effect which the invention of so original and striking an hypothesis, and one that raises such magnificent conceptions of the union between the Deity and the

press his own theory of independent ideas, I cannot help agreeing with Locke: "What service does that word do us in one case or the other, when it is only a new word brought in without any new conception at all? For my mind, when it sees a color or figure, is altered, I know, from the not having such or such a perception to the having it; but when, to explain this, I am told, that either of these perceptions is a modification of the mind, what do I con-

ceive more than that, from not having such a perception, my mind is come to have such a perception? Which is what I as well knew before the word 'modification' was made use of, which, by its use, has made me conceive nothing more than what I conceived before." — Examination of Malebranche's theory, in Locke's works, vol. iii. p. 427, ed. 1719 — 1847.  
<sup>1</sup> L. lib. c. 8

human soul, would produce on a man of an elevated and contemplative genius, that we must account for Malebranche's forgetfulness of much that he has judiciously said in part of his treatise, on the limitation of our faculties and the imperfect knowledge we can attain as to our intellectual nature. For, if we should admit that ideas are substances, and not accidents of the thinking spirit, it would still be doubtful whether he has wholly enumerated, or conclusively refuted, the possible hypotheses as to their existence in the mind. And his more direct reasonings labor under the same difficulty from the manifest incapacity of our understandings to do more than form conjectures and dim notions of what we can so imperfectly bring before them.

58. The fourth and fifth books of the *Recherche de la Verité* treat of the natural inclinations and passions, and of the errors which spring from those sources. These books are various and discursive, and very characteristic of the author's mind; abounding with a mystical theology, which extends to an absolute negation of secondary causes, as well as with poignant satire on the follies of mankind. In every part of his treatise, but especially in these books, Malebranche pursues with unsparing ridicule two classes, the men of learning, and the men of the world. With Aristotle and the whole school of his disciples he has an inveterate quarrel, and omits no occasion of holding them forth to contempt. This seems to have been in a great measure warranted by their dogmatism, their bigotry, their pertinacious resistance to modern science, especially to the Cartesian philosophy, which Malebranche in general followed. "Let them," he exclaims, "prove, if they can, that Aristotle, or any of themselves, has deduced one truth in physical philosophy from any principle peculiar to himself, and we will promise never to speak of him but in eulogy."<sup>1</sup> But, until this gauntlet should be taken up, he thought himself at liberty to use very different language. "The works of the Stagirite," he observes, "are so obscure and full of indefinite words, that we have a color for ascribing to him the most opposite opinions. In fact, we make him say what we please, because he says very little, though with much parade; just as children fancy bells to say any thing, because they make a great noise, and in reality say nothing at all."

<sup>1</sup> L. IV. c. 6.



59. But such philosophers are not the only class of the learned he depreciates. Those who pass their time in gazing through telescopes, and distribute provinces in the moon to their friends; those who pore over worthless books, such as the Rabbinical and other Oriental writers, or compose folio volumes on the animals mentioned in Scripture, while they can hardly tell what are found in their own province; those who accumulate quotations to inform us not of truth, but of what other men have taken for truth, — are exposed to his sharp, but doubtless exaggerated and unreasonable, ridicule. Malebranche, like many men of genius, was much too intolerant of what might give pleasure to other men, and too narrow in his measure of utility. He seems to think little valuable in human learning but metaphysics and algebra.<sup>1</sup> From the learned he passes to the great, and, after enumerating the circumstances which obstruct their perception of truth, comes to the blunt conclusion, that men "much raised above the rest by rank, dignity, or wealth, or whose minds are occupied in gaining these advantages, are remarkably subject to error, and hardly capable of discerning any truths which lie a little out of the common way."<sup>2</sup>

60. The sixth and last book announces a method of directing our pursuit of truth, by which we may avoid the many errors to which our understandings are liable. It promises to give them all the perfection of which our nature is capable, by prescribing the rules we should invariably observe. But it must, I think, be confessed that there is less originality in this method than we might expect. We find, however, many acute and useful, if not always novel, observations on the conduct of the understanding; and it may be reckoned among the books which would supply materials for what is still wanting to philosophical literature, an ample and useful logic. We

<sup>1</sup> It is rather amusing to find, that, while lamenting the want of a review of books, he predicts that we shall never see one, on account of the prejudice of mankind in favor of authors. The prophecy was fulfilled almost at the time. "On regarde ordinairement les auteurs comme des hommes rares et extraordinaires, et beaucoup élevés au-dessus des autres: on les révère donc au lieu de les mépriser et de les punir. Ainsi il n'y a guères d'apparence que les hommes érigent jamais un tribunal pour examiner et pour condamner tous les livres, qui ne font que corrompre la raison." — C. 8.

"La plupart des livres de certains savans ne sont fabriqués qu'à coups de distinctions, et ils n'ont guères l'air que les tables des livres qu'ils citent, ou quelques lieux communs, ramassés de différens auteurs. On n'oseroit entrer d'avantage dans le détail de ces choses, ni en donner des exemples, de peur de choquer des personnes aussi sçevres et aussi bibleses, que sont ces faux savans; car on ne prend pas plaisir à se faire injurier en Grec et en Arabe."

<sup>2</sup> C. 4.

are so frequently inattentive, he observes, especially to the pure ideas of the understanding, that all resources should be employed to fix our thoughts. And for this purpose we may make use of the passions, the senses, or the imagination; but the second with less danger than the first, and the third than the second. Geometrical figures he ranges under the aids supplied to the imagination rather than to the senses. He dwells much at length on the utility of geometry in fixing our attention, and of algebra in compressing and arranging our thoughts. All sciences, he well remarks (and I do not know that it had been said before), which treat of things distinguishable by more or less in quantity, and which consequently may be represented by extension, are capable of illustration by diagrams. But these, he conceives, are inapplicable to moral truths, though sure consequences may be derived from them. Algebra, however, is far more useful in improving the understanding than geometry, and is in fact, with its sister arithmetic, the best means that we possess.<sup>1</sup> But, as men like better to exercise the imagination than the pure intellect, geometry is the more favorite study of the two.

61. Malebranche may, perhaps, be thought to have occupied too much of our attention at the expense of more popular writers. But for this very reason, that the *Recherche de la Vérité* is not at present much read, I have dwelt long on a treatise of so great celebrity in its own age, and which, even more perhaps than the metaphysical writings of Descartes, has influenced that department of philosophy. Malebranche never loses sight of the great principle of the soul's immateriality, even in his long and rather hypothetical disquisitions on the instrumentality of the

Character  
of Male-  
branche.

<sup>1</sup> L. vi. c. 4. All conceptions of abstract ideas, he justly remarks in another place, are accompanied with some imagination, though we are often not aware of it; because these ideas have no natural images or traces associated with them, but such only as the will of man or chance has given. Thus, in analysis, however general the ideas, we use letters and signs always associated with the ideas of the things, though they are not really related, and for this reason do not give us false and confused notions. Hence, he thinks, the ideas of things which can only be perceived by the understanding may become associated with the traces on the brain, L. v. c. 2. This is evidently as applicable to language as it is to algebra.

Cudworth has a somewhat similar remark in his *Immutable Morality*, that the cogitations we have of corporeal things are usually, in his technical style, both noematical and phantasmatical together; the one being as it were the soul, and the other the body of them. "Whenever we think of a phantasmatical universal or universalized phantasm, or a thing which we have no clear intelllection of (as, for example, of the nature of a rose in general), there is a complication of something noematical and something phantasmatical together; for phantasms themselves as well sensations are always individual things." p. 143.—[See also the quotation from Gasendi, *supra*, § 16.—1342.]

brain in acts of thought; and his language is far less objectionable on this subject than that of succeeding philosophers. He is always consistent and clear in distinguishing the soul itself from its modifications and properties. He knew well and had deeply considered the application of mathematical and physical science to the philosophy of the human mind. He is very copious and diligent in illustration, and very clear in definition. His principal errors, and the sources of them in his peculiar temperament, have appeared in the course of these pages. And to these we may add his maintaining some Cartesian paradoxes, such as the system of vortices, and the want of sensation in brutes. The latter he deduced from the immateriality of a thinking principle, supposing it incredible; though he owns it had been the tenet of Augustin, that there could be an immaterial spirit in the lower animals, and also from the incompatibility of any unmerited suffering with the justice of God.<sup>1</sup> Nor was Malebranche exempt from some prejudices of scholastic theology; and, though he generally took care to avoid its technical language, is content to repel the objection to his denial of all secondary causation from its making God the sole author of sin, by saying that sin, being a privation of righteousness, is negative, and consequently requires no cause.

62. Malebranche bears a striking resemblance to his great contemporary Pascal, though they were not, I believe, in any personal relation to each other; nor could either have availed himself of the other's writings. Both of ardent minds, endowed with strong imagination and lively wit, sarcastic, severe, fearless, disdainful of popular opinion and accredited reputations; both imbued with the notion of a vast difference between the original and actual state of man, and thus solving many phenomena of his being; both, in different modes and degrees, sceptical, and rigorous in the exaction of proof; both undervaluing all human knowledge beyond the regions of mathematics; both of rigid strictness in morals, and a fervid enthusiastic piety. But in Malebranche there is a less overpowering sense of religion; his eye roams unblenched in the light, before which that of Pascal had been veiled in awe; he is sustained by a less timid

<sup>1</sup> This he had borrowed from a maxim of Augustin: "Sub justo Deo quisquam uld mereatur, miser esse non potest;"

whence, it seems, that father had inferred the imputation of original sin to infants; a happy mode of escaping the difficulty.

desire of truth, by greater confidence in the inspirations that are breathed into his mind; he is more quick in adopting a novel opinion, but less apt to embrace a sophism in defence of an old one; he has less energy, but more copiousness and variety

63. Arnauld, who, though at first in personal friendship with Malebranche, held no friendship in a balance with his steady love of truth, combated the chief points of the other's theory in a treatise on True and False Ideas. This work I have never had the good fortune to see: it appears to assail a leading principle of Malebranche, the separate existence of ideas, as objects in the mind, independent and distinguishable from the sensation itself. Arnauld maintained, as Reid and others have since done, that we do not perceive or feel ideas, but real objects, and thus led the way to a school which has been called that of Scotland, and has had a great popularity among our later metaphysicians. It would require a critical examination of his work, which I have not been able to make, to determine precisely what were the opinions of this philosopher.<sup>1</sup>

64. The peculiar hypothesis of Malebranche, that we see all things in God, was examined by Locke in a short piece, contained in the collection of his works. It will readily be conceived, that two philosophers, one eminently mystical, and endeavoring upon this highly transcendental theme to grasp in his mind and express in his language something beyond the faculties of man, the other as characteristically averse to mystery, and slow to admit any thing without proof, would have hardly any common ground even to fight upon. Locke, therefore, does little else than complain that he cannot understand what Malebranche has advanced; and most of his readers will probably find themselves in the same position.

65. He had, however, an English supporter of some celebrity in his own age, Norris; a disciple, and one of the latest we have had, of the Platonic school of Henry More. The principal metaphysical treatise of Norris, his *Essay on the Ideal World*, was published in two parts,

<sup>1</sup> Brucker; Buhle; Reid's *Intellectual Powers*. [But see what Sir W. Hamilton has said in *Edinb. Rev.*, vol. lli., and in his edition of Reid, p. 296 *et alibi*. Though Arnauld denied the *separate* existence of ideas, as held by Malebranche, he ad-

mitted them as modifications of the mind, and supposed, like Descartes and most others, that perception of external objects is representation, and not intuition — 1847.]

Arnauld on  
true and  
false ideas.

Norris.



1701 and 1702. It does not, therefore, come within our limits. Norris is more thoroughly Platonic than Malebranche, to whom, however, he pays great deference, and adopts his fundamental hypothesis of seeing all things in God. He is a writer of fine genius and a noble elevation of moral sentiments, such as predisposes men for the Platonic schemes of theosophy. He looked up to Augustin with as much veneration as to Plato, and respected, more perhaps than Malebranche, certainly more than the generality of English writers, the theological metaphysicians of the schools. With these he mingled some visions of a later mysticism. But his reasonings will seldom bear a close scrutiny.

66. In the Thoughts of Pascal we find many striking remarks on the logic of that science with which he was peculiarly conversant, and upon the general foundations of certainty. He had reflected deeply upon the sceptical objections to all human reasoning; and though sometimes, out of a desire to elevate religious faith at its expense, he seems to consider them unanswerable, he was too clear-headed to believe them just. "Reason," he says, "confounds the dogmatists; and nature, the sceptics."<sup>1</sup> "We have an incapacity of demonstration, which the one cannot overcome: we have a conception of truth, which the others cannot disturb."<sup>2</sup> He throws out a notion of a more complete method of reasoning than that of geometry, wherein every thing shall be demonstrated, which, however, he holds to be unattainable;<sup>3</sup> and perhaps on this account he might think the cavils of Pyrrhonism invincible by pure reason. But as he afterwards admits that we may have a full certainty of propositions that cannot be demonstrated, such as the infinity of number and space, and that such incapability of direct proof is rather a perfection than a defect, this notion of a greater completeness in evidence seems neither clear nor consistent.<sup>4</sup>

67. Geometry, Pascal observes, is almost the only subject as to which we find truths wherein all men agree. And one cause of this is, that geometers alone regard the true laws of demonstration. These, as enumerated by him, are eight in number: 1. To define nothing which cannot be expressed in

<sup>1</sup> Œuvres de Pascal, vol. i. p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> P. 206.

<sup>3</sup> Pensées de Pascal, part i. art. 2.

<sup>4</sup> "Comme la cause qui les rend incapables de démonstration n'est pas leur obscurité, mais au contraire leur extrême évidence, ce manque de preuve n'est pas un défaut, mais plutôt une perfection."

bles de démonstration n'est pas leur obscurité, mais au contraire leur extrême évidence, ce manque de preuve n'est pas un défaut, mais plutôt une perfection."

clearer terms than those in which it is already expressed; 2. To leave no obscure or equivocal terms undefined; 3. To employ in the definition no terms not already known; 4. To omit nothing in the principles from which we argue, unless we are sure it is granted; 5. To lay down no axiom which is not perfectly evident; 6. To demonstrate nothing which is as clear already as we can make it; 7. To prove every thing in the least doubtful, by means of self-evident axioms, or of propositions already demonstrated; 8. To substitute mentally the definition instead of the thing defined. Of these rules, he says, the first, fourth, and sixth are not absolutely necessary in order to avoid error; but the other five are indispensable. Yet, though they may be found in books of logic, none but the geometers have paid any regard to them. The authors of these books seem not to have entered into the spirit of their own precepts. All other rules than those he has given are useless or mischievous: they contain, he says, the whole art of demonstration.<sup>1</sup>

68. The reverence of Pascal, like that of Malebranche, for what is established in religion, does not extend to philosophy. We do not find in them, as we may sometimes perceive in the present day, all sorts of prejudices against the liberties of the human mind clustering together like a herd of bats, by an instinctive association. He has the same idea as Bacon, that the ancients were properly the children among mankind. Not only each man, he says, advances daily in science, but all men collectively make a constant progress; so that all generations of mankind during so many ages may be considered as one man, always subsisting and always learning; and the old age of this universal man is not to be sought in the period next to his birth, but in that which is most removed from it. Those we call ancients were truly novices in all things; and we, who have added to all they knew the experience of so many succeeding ages, have a better claim to that antiquity which we revere in them. In this, with much ingenuity and much truth, there is a certain mixture of fallacy, which I shall not wait to point out.

69. The genius of Pascal was admirably fitted for acute observation on the constitution of human nature, if he had not seen every thing through a refracting medium of religious prejudice. When this does not interfere to bias his judgment,

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres de Pascal*, t. 66.

## SPINOSA'S ETHICS.

abounds with fine remarks, though always a little tending towards severity. One of the most useful and original is the following: "When we would show any one that he is mistaken, our best course is to observe on what side he considers the subject, for his view of it is generally right on this side, and admit to him that he is right so far. He will be satisfied with this acknowledgment that he was not wrong in his judgment, but only inadvertent in not looking at the whole of the case. For we are less ashamed of not having seen the whole, than of being deceived in what we do see; and this may perhaps arise from an impossibility of the understanding's being deceived in what it does see, just as the perceptions of the senses, as such, must be always true."<sup>1</sup>

Spinoza's  
Ethics.

70. The Cartesian philosophy has been supposed to have produced a metaphysician very divergent in most of his theory from that school,—Benedict Spinoza. No treatise is written in a more rigidly geometrical method than his *Ethics*. It rests on definitions and axioms, from which the propositions are derived in close, brief, and usually perspicuous demonstrations. The few explanations he has thought necessary are contained in scholia. Thus a fabric is erected, astonishing and bewildering in its entire effect, yet so regularly constructed, that the reader must pause and return on his steps to discover an error in the workmanship, while he cannot also but acknowledge the good faith and intimate persuasion of having attained the truth, which the acute and deep-reflecting author everywhere displays.

71. Spinoza was born in 1632: we find by his correspondence with Oldenburg, in 1661, that he had already developed his entire scheme; and, in that with Des Vries, in 1663, the propositions of the *Ethics* are alluded to numerically, as we now read them.<sup>2</sup> It was, therefore, the fruit of early meditation, as its fearlessness, its general disregard of the slow process of observation, its unhesitating dogmatism, might lead us to expect. In what degree he had availed himself of prior writers is not evident; with Descartes and Lord Bacon he was familiar, and from the former he had derived some leading tenets; but he observes, both in him and Bacon, what he calls mistakes as to the first cause

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres de Pascal*, p. 149. Though Pascal here says that the perceptions of the senses are always true, we find the con-

trary asserted in other passages: he is not uniformly consistent with himself.  
<sup>2</sup> *Spinoza's Opera Posthuma*, p. 568, 466.

and origin of things, their ignorance of the real nature of the human mind, and of the true sources of error.<sup>1</sup> The pantheistic theory of Jordano Bruno is not very remote from that of Spinoza; but the rhapsodies of the Italian, who seldom aims at proof, can hardly have supplied much to the subtle mind of the Jew of Amsterdam. Buhle has given us an exposition of the Spinosistic theory.<sup>2</sup> But several propositions in this, I do not find in the author; and Buhle has at least, without any necessity, entirely deviated from the arrangement he found in the Ethics. This seems as unreasonable in a work so rigorously systematic, as it would be in the elements of Euclid; and I believe the following pages will prove more faithful to the text. But it is no easy task to translate and abridge a writer of such extraordinary conciseness as well as subtlety; nor is it probable that my attempt will be intelligible to those who have not habituated themselves to metaphysical inquiry.

72. The first book or part of the Ethics is entitled Concerning God, and contains the entire theory of Spinoza. It may even be said that this is found in a few of the first propositions; which being granted, the rest could not easily be denied; presenting, as they do, little more than new aspects of the former, or evident deductions from them. Upon eight definitions and seven axioms reposes this philosophical superstructure. A substance, by the third definition, is that, the conception of which does not require the conception of any thing else as antecedent to it.<sup>3</sup> The attribute of a substance is whatever the mind perceives to constitute its essence.<sup>4</sup> The mode of a substance is its accident or affection, by means of which it is conceived.<sup>5</sup> In the sixth definition, he says, I understand by the name of God a being absolutely infinite; that is, a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses an eternal and infinite essence. Whatever expresses an essence, and involves no contradiction, may be predicated of an absolutely infinite

View of his  
metaphysical  
theory.

<sup>1</sup> "Cartes et Bacon tam longè a cognitione primæ causæ et originis omnium rerum aberrarunt. . . . Veniam naturam humanæ mentis non cognoverunt . . . veram causam erroris nunquam operati sunt."

<sup>2</sup> Hist. de la Philosophie, vol. iii. p. 440.

<sup>3</sup> "Per substantiam intelligo id quod in se est, et per se concipitur: hoc est, id cuius conceptus non indiget conceptu alterius rei, a quo formari debeat."

The last words are omitted by Spinoza in a letter to De Vries (p. 493), where he repeats this definition.

<sup>4</sup> "Per attributum intelligo id quod intellectus de substantiâ percipit, tanquam ejusdem essentiam constitutivam."

<sup>5</sup> "Per modum intelligo substantiæ affectionem, sive id, quod in alio est, per quod etiam concipitur."



being.<sup>1</sup> The most important of the axioms are the following: From a given determinate cause the effect necessarily follows; but, if there be no determinate cause, no effect can follow. — The knowledge of an effect depends upon the knowledge of the cause, and includes it. — Things that have nothing in common with each other cannot be understood by means of each other; that is, the conception of one does not include that of the other. — A true idea must agree with its object.<sup>2</sup>

73. Spinoza proceeds to his demonstrations upon the basis of these assumptions alone. Two substances, having different attributes, have nothing in common with each other; and hence one cannot be the cause of the other, since one may be conceived without involving the conception of the other; but an effect cannot be conceived without involving the knowledge of the cause.<sup>3</sup> It seems to be in this fourth axiom, and in the proposition grounded upon it, that the fundamental fallacy lurks. The relation between a cause and effect is surely something different from our perfect comprehension of it, or indeed from our having any knowledge of it at all: much less can the contrary assertion be deemed axiomatic. But, if we should concede this postulate, it might perhaps be very difficult to resist the subsequent proofs, so ingeniously and with such geometrical rigor are they arranged.

74. Two or more things cannot be distinguished, except by the diversity of their attributes, or by that of their modes; for there is nothing out of ourselves except substances and their modes. But there cannot be two substances of the same attribute, since there would be no means of distinguishing them except their modes or affections; and every substance, being prior in order of time to its modes, may be considered independently of them: hence two such substances could not be distinguished at all. One substance, therefore, cannot be the cause of another; for they cannot have the same attribute, that is, any thing in common with one another.<sup>4</sup> Every substance, therefore, is self-caused; that is, its essence implies its existence.<sup>5</sup> It is also necessarily infinite, for it

<sup>1</sup> "Per Deum intelligo Ens absolutè infinitum, hoc est, substantiam constantem infinitis attributis, quorum unumquodque æternam et infinitam essentiam exprimit. Dico absolutè infinitum, non autem in suo genere: quicquid enim in suo genere tantum infinitum est, infinita de eo attributa arguere possumus; quod autem absolutè

infinitum est, ad ejus essentiam pertinet, quicquid essentiam exprimit et negationem nullam involvit."

<sup>2</sup> Axiomata, ill. iv., v., and vi.

<sup>3</sup> Prop. ii. and iii.

<sup>4</sup> Prop. vi.

<sup>5</sup> Prop. vii.

would otherwise be terminated by some other of the same nature and necessarily existing; but two substances cannot have the same attribute, and therefore cannot both possess necessary existence.<sup>1</sup> The more reality or existence any being possesses, the more attributes are to be ascribed to it. This, he says, appears by the definition of an attribute.<sup>2</sup> The proof, however, is surely not manifest; nor do we clearly apprehend what he meant by degrees of reality or existence. But of this theorem he was very proud. I look upon the demonstration, he says in a letter, as capital (*palmarium*), that the more attributes we ascribe to any being, the more we are compelled to acknowledge its existence; that is, the more we conceive it as true, and not a mere chimera.<sup>3</sup> And from this he derived the real existence of God, though the former proof seems collateral to it. God, or a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each expressing an eternal and infinite power, necessarily exists.<sup>4</sup> For such an essence involves existence. And, besides this, if any thing does not exist, a cause must be given for its non-existence; since this requires one as much as existence itself.<sup>5</sup> The cause may be either in the nature of the thing, as *e. gr.* a square circle cannot exist by the circle's nature, or in something extrinsic. But neither of these can prevent the existence of God. The later propositions in Spinoza are chiefly obvious corollaries from the definitions and a few of the first propositions which contain the whole theory, which he proceeds to expand.

75. There can be no substance but God. Whatever is, is in God; and nothing can be conceived without God.<sup>6</sup> For he is the sole substance; and modes cannot be conceived without a substance; but, besides substance and mode, nothing exists. God is not corporeal; but body is a mode of God, and therefore uncreated. God is the permanent, but not the transient, cause of all things.<sup>7</sup> He is the efficient cause of their essence as well as their existence, since otherwise their essence might be conceived without God, which has been shown to be absurd. Thus particular things are but the affections of

<sup>1</sup> Prop. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Prop. ix.

<sup>3</sup> P. 468. This is in the letter to De Vries, above quoted.

<sup>4</sup> Prop. xi.

<sup>5</sup> If twenty men exist, neither more nor less, an extrinsic reason must be given for

this precise number, since the definition of a man does not involve it. Prop. viii. Schol. ii.

<sup>6</sup> Prop. xiv.

<sup>7</sup> "Deus est omnium rerum causa immanens, sed non transiens."—Prop. xviii.

God's attributes, or modes in which they are determinately expressed.<sup>1</sup>

76. This pantheistic scheme is the fruitful mother of many paradoxes, upon which Spinoza proceeds to dwell. There is no contingency, but every thing is determined by the necessity of the divine nature, both as to its existence and operation; nor could any thing be produced by God otherwise than as it is.<sup>2</sup> His power is the same as his essence; for he is the necessary cause both of himself and of all things, and it is as impossible for us to conceive him not to act as not to exist.<sup>3</sup> God, considered in the attributes of his infinite substance, is the same as nature, that is, *natura naturans*; but nature, in another sense, or *natura naturata*, expresses but the modes under which the divine attributes appear.<sup>4</sup> And intelligence, considered in act, even though infinite, should be referred to *natura naturata*; for intelligence, in this sense, is but a mode of thinking, which can only be conceived by means of our conception of thinking in the abstract, that is, by an attribute of God.<sup>5</sup> The faculty of thinking, as distinguished from the act, as also those of desiring, loving, and the rest, Spinoza explicitly denies to exist at all.

77. In an appendix to the first chapter, De Deo, Spinoza controverts what he calls the prejudice about final causes. Men are born ignorant of causes, but merely conscious of their own appetites, by which they desire their own good. Hence they only care for the final cause of their own actions or those of others, and inquire no farther when they are satisfied about these. And finding many things in themselves and in nature, serving as means to a certain good, which things they know not to be provided by themselves, they have believed that some one has provided them; arguing from the analogy of the means which they in other instances themselves employ. Hence they have imagined gods; and these gods they suppose to consult the good of men in order to be worshipped by them, and have devised every mode of superstitious devotion to insure the favor of these divinities. And, finding in the midst of so many beneficial things in nature not a few of an opposite effect, they have ascribed them to the anger of the gods on account of the neglect of men to wor-

<sup>1</sup> Prop. xxv. and Coroll.

<sup>2</sup> Prop. xxix.-xxxiii.

<sup>3</sup> Prop. xxxix., and part II. prop. III.

Schol.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. in prop. axix.

<sup>5</sup> Prop. xxxi. The atheism of Spinoza

is manifest from this single proposition.

ship them: nor has experience of calamities falling alike on the pious and impious cured them of this belief; choosing rather to acknowledge their ignorance of the reason why good and evil are thus distributed, than to give up their theory. Spinoza thinks the hypothesis of final causes refuted by his proposition, that all things happen by eternal necessity. Moreover, if God were to act for an end, he must desire something which he wants; for it is acknowledged by theologians, that he acts for his own sake, and not for the sake of things created.

78. Men, having satisfied themselves that all things were created for them, have invented names to distinguish that as good which tends to their benefit; and, believing themselves free, have gotten the notions of right and wrong, praise and dispraise. And, when they can easily apprehend and recollect the relations of things, they call them well ordered; if not, ill ordered; and then say that God created all things in order, as if order were any thing except in regard to our imagination of it: and thus they ascribe imagination to God himself, unless they mean that he created things for the sake of our imagining them.

79. It has been sometimes doubted whether the Spinozistic philosophy excludes altogether an infinite intelligence. That it rejects a moral providence or creative mind is manifest in every proposition. His Deity could at most be but a cold passive intelligence, lost to our understandings and feelings in its metaphysical infinity. It was not, however, in fact so much as this. It is true, that in a few passages we find what seems at first a dim recognition of the fundamental principle of theism. In one of his letters to Oldenburg, he asserts an infinite power of thinking, which, considered in its infinity, embraces all nature as its object, and of which the thoughts proceed according to the order of nature; being its correlative ideas.<sup>1</sup> But afterwards he rejected the term, "power of thinking," altogether. The first proposition of the second part of the Ethics, or that entitled On the Mind, runs thus: Thought

<sup>1</sup> "Statuo dari in natura potentiam infinitam cogitandi quæ quatenus infinita in se continet totam naturam objective, et cujus cogitationes procedunt eodem modo ac natura, ejus nimirum edictum." — p. 441. In another place he says, perhaps at some expense of his usual candor, "Agens interius, id quod summum mihi præbet satis-

factionem et mentis tranquillitatem, causa potentia Estis summe perfecti et ejus immutabilis ita fieri decrevit." — p. 440. What follows is in the manuscript. But Spinoza had wrought himself up, like Bruno, to a mystical perception of his infinite unity.



is an attribute of God; or, God is a thinking being. Yet this, when we look at the demonstration, vanishes in an abstraction destructive of personality.<sup>1</sup> And in fact we cannot reflect at all on the propositions already laid down by Spinoza, without perceiving that they annihilate every possible hypothesis in which the being of a God can be intelligibly stated.

80. The second book of the *Ethics* begins, like the first, with definitions and axioms. Body he defines to be a certain and determinate mode expressing the essence of God, considered as extended. The essence of any thing he defines to be that, according to the affirmation or negation of which the thing exists or otherwise. An idea is a conception which the mind forms as a thinking being. And he would rather say conception than perception, because the latter seems to imply the presence of an object. In the third axiom he says: Modes of thinking, such as love, desire, or whatever name we may give to the affections of the mind, cannot exist without an idea of their object; but an idea may exist with no other mode of thinking.<sup>2</sup> And in the fifth: We perceive no singular things besides bodies and modes of thinking; thus distinguishing, like Locke, between ideas of sensation and of reflection.

81. Extension, by the second proposition, is an attribute of God as well as thought. As it follows from the infinite extension of God, that all bodies are portions of his substance, inasmuch as they cannot be conceived without it; so all particular acts of intelligence are portions of God's infinite intelligence, and thus all things are in him. Man is not a substance, but something which is in God, and cannot be conceived without him; that is, an affection or mode of the divine substance expressing its nature in a determinate manner.<sup>3</sup> The human mind is not a substance; but an idea constitutes its actual being, and it must be the idea of an existing thing.<sup>4</sup> In this he plainly loses sight of the percipient in the

<sup>1</sup> "Singulares cogitationes, sive hec et illa cogitatio, modi sunt, qui Dei naturam certo et determinato modo expriment. Competit ergo Dei attributum, cujus conceptum singulares omnes cogitationes involvunt, per quod etiam concipiuntur. Hæc igitur cogitatio unum ex infinitis Dei attributis quod Dei æternam et infinitam essentiam exprimit, sive Deus est res cogitans."

<sup>2</sup> "Modi cogitandi, ut amor, cupiditas,

vel quocunque nomine affectus animi insigniuntur, non dantur nisi in eodem individuo detur idea rei amate, desiderate, &c. At idea dari potest, quando nullus alius detur cogitandi modus."

<sup>3</sup> Prop. x.

<sup>4</sup> "Quod actuale mentis humanæ esse constituit, nihil aliud est quam idea rei alicujus singularis actu existentis." This is an anticipation of what we find in Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*, the

perception; but it was the inevitable result of the fundamental sophisms of Spinoza to annihilate personal consciousness. The human mind, he afterwards asserts, is part of the infinite intellect of God; and when we say, the mind perceives this or that, it is only that God, not as infinite, but so far as he constitutes the essence of the human mind, has such or such ideas.<sup>1</sup>

82. The object of the human mind is body actually existing.<sup>2</sup> He proceeds to explain the connection of the human body with the mind, and the association of ideas. But in all this, advancing always synthetically and by demonstration, he becomes frequently obscure, if not sophistical. The idea of the human mind is in God, and is united to the mind itself in the same manner as the latter is to the body.<sup>3</sup> The obscurity and subtlety of this proposition are not relieved by the demonstration; but in some of these passages we may observe a singular approximation to the theory of Malebranche. Both, though with very different tenets on the highest subjects, had been trained in the same school; and, if Spinoza had brought himself to acknowledge the personal distinctness of the Supreme Being from his intelligent creation, he might have passed for one of those mystical theosophists who were not averse to an objective pantheism.

83. The mind does not know itself, except so far as it receives ideas of the affections of the body.<sup>4</sup> But these ideas of sensation do not give an adequate knowledge of an external body, nor of the human body itself.<sup>5</sup> The mind, therefore, has but an inadequate and confused knowledge of any thing, so long as it judges only by fortuitous perceptions; but may attain one clear and distinct by internal reflection and comparison.<sup>6</sup> No positive idea can be called false; for there can be no such idea without God, and all ideas in God are true, that is, correspond with their object.<sup>7</sup> Falsity, therefore, consists in that privation of truth which arises from inadequate ideas. An adequate idea he has defined to be one which contains no incompatibility, without regard to the reality of its supposed correlative object.

negation of a substance, or Ego, to which paradox no one can come except a profound metaphysician.

<sup>1</sup> Prop. xi., coroll.

<sup>2</sup> Prop. xiii.

<sup>3</sup> "Mentis humane datur etiam in Deo idea, sive cognitio, quæ in Deo eodem modo sequitur, et ad Deum eodem modo refer-

tur, ac idea sive cognitio corporis humani." — Prop. xx. "Hæc mentis idea eodem modo unita est menti, ac ipse mens unita est corpori."

<sup>4</sup> Prop. xxiii.

<sup>5</sup> Prop. xxv.

<sup>6</sup> Schol., prop. xxix.

<sup>7</sup> Prop. xxxi., xxxii., xxxiii.

84. All bodies agree in some things, or have something in common: of these all men have adequate ideas;<sup>1</sup> and this is the origin of what are called common notions, which all men possess; as extension, duration, number. But, to explain the nature of universals, Spinoza observes, that the human body can only form at the same time a certain number of distinct images: if this number be exceeded, they become confused; and as the mind perceives distinctly just so many images as can be formed in the body, when these are confused the mind will also perceive them confusedly, and will comprehend them under one attribute, as Man, Horse, Dog; the mind perceiving a number of such images, but not their differences of stature, colors, and the like. And these notions will not be alike in all minds, varying according to the frequency with which the parts of the complex image have occurred. Thus those who have contemplated most frequently the erect figure of man will think of him as a perpendicular animal, others as two-legged, others as unfeathered, others as rational. Hence so many disputes among philosophers who have tried to explain natural things by mere images.<sup>2</sup>

85. Thus we form universal ideas, first by singulars, represented by the senses confusedly, imperfectly, and disorderly; secondly, by signs, that is, by associating the remembrance of things with words,—both of which he calls imagination, or *primi generis cognitio*; thirdly, by what he calls reason, or *secundi generis cognitio*; and, fourthly, by intuitive knowledge, or *terti generis cognitio*.<sup>3</sup> Knowledge of the first kind, or imagination, is the only source of error; the second and third being necessarily true.<sup>4</sup> These alone enable us to distinguish truth from falsehood. Reason contemplates things, not as contingent, but necessary; and whoever has a true idea knows certainly that his idea is true. Every idea of a singular existing thing involves the eternal and infinite being of God. For nothing can be conceived without God; and the ideas of all things, having God for their cause, considered under the attribute of which they are modes, must involve the conception of the attribute, that is, the being of God.<sup>5</sup>

86. It is highly necessary to distinguish images, ideas, and words, which many confound. Those who think ideas consist

<sup>1</sup> Prop. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. prop. xi.

<sup>3</sup> Schol., li., prop. xl.

<sup>4</sup> Prop. xli., xlii., of *argument.*

<sup>5</sup> Prop. xiv.

in images which they perceive, fancy that ideas of which we can form no image are but arbitrary figments. They look at ideas as pictures on a tablet, and hence do not understand that an idea, as such, involves an affirmation or negation. And those who confound words with ideas, fancy they can will something contrary to what they perceive, because they can affirm or deny it in words. But these prejudices will be laid aside by him who reflects that thought does not involve the conception of extension; and therefore that an idea, being a mode of thought, neither consists in images nor in words, the essence of which consists in corporeal motions, not involving the conception of thought.<sup>1</sup>

87. The human mind has an adequate knowledge of the eternal and infinite being of God. But men cannot imagine God as they can bodies, and hence have not that clear perception of his being which they have of that of bodies, and have also perplexed themselves by associating the word God with sensible images, which it is hard to avoid. This is the chief source of all error, that men do not apply names to things rightly. For they do not err in their own minds, but in this application; as men who cast up wrong see different numbers in their minds from those in the true result.<sup>2</sup>

88. The mind has no free-will, but is determined by a cause, which itself is determined by some other, and so for ever. For the mind is but a mode of thinking, and therefore cannot be the free cause of its own actions. Nor has it any absolute faculty of loving, desiring, understanding; these being only metaphysical abstractions.<sup>3</sup> Will and understanding are one and the same thing; and volitions are only affirmations or negations, each of which belongs to the essence of the idea affirmed or denied.<sup>4</sup> In this there seems to be not only an extraordinary deviation from common language, but an absence of any meaning which, to my apprehension at least, is capable of being given to his words. Yet we have seen something of the same kind said by Malebranche: and it will also be found in a recently published work of Cudworth,<sup>5</sup> a writer certainly uninfluenced by either of these, so that it may be suspected of having some older authority.

<sup>1</sup> Schol., prop. xlix.

<sup>2</sup> Prop. xlvii. "Atque hinc plerumque oriuntur controversie, nempe, quia homines mentem suam non recte explicant, vel quia alterius mentem male interpretantur."

<sup>3</sup> Prop. xlviii.

<sup>4</sup> Prop. xlix.

<sup>5</sup> See Cudworth's *Treatise on Free-will* (1828), p. 20, where the will and understanding are purposely, and, I think, very erroneously confounded.



89. In the third part of this treatise, Spinoza comes to the consideration of the passions. Most who have written on moral subjects, he says, have rather treated man as something out of nature, or as a kind of *imperium in imperio*, than as part of the general order. They have conceived him to enjoy a power of disturbing that order by his own determination, and ascribed his weakness and inconstancy, not to the necessary laws of the system, but to some strange defect in himself, which they cease not to lament, deride, or execrate. But the acts of mankind, and the passions from which they proceed, are in reality but links in the series, and proceed in harmony with the common laws of universal nature.

90. We are said to act when any thing takes place within us, or without us, for which we are an adequate cause; that is, when it may be explained by means of our own nature alone. We are said to be acted upon, when any thing takes place within us which cannot wholly be explained by our own nature. The affections of the body which increase or diminish its power of action, and the ideas of those affections, he denominates passions (*affectus*). Neither the body can determine the mind to thinking, nor can the mind determine the body to motion or rest. For all that takes place in body must be caused by God, considered under his attribute of extension; and all that takes place in mind must be caused by God, under his attribute of thinking. The mind and body are but one thing, considered under different attributes; the order of action and passion in the body being the same in nature with that of action and passion in the mind. But men, though ignorant how far the natural powers of the body reach, ascribe its operations to the determination of the mind; veiling their ignorance in specious words. For, if they allege that the body cannot act without the mind, it may be answered, that the mind cannot think till it is impelled by the body; nor are the volitions of the mind any thing else than its appetites, which are modified by the body.

91. All things endeavor to continue in their actual being; this endeavor being nothing else than their essence, which causes them to be, until some exterior cause destroys their being. The mind is conscious of its own endeavor to continue as it is, which is, in other words, the appetite that seeks self-preservation; what the mind is thus conscious of seeking, it

Spinoza's  
theory of  
action and  
passion.

judges to be good, and not inversely. Many things increase or diminish the power of action in the body; and all such things have a corresponding effect on the power of thinking in the mind. Thus it undergoes many changes, and passes through different stages of more or less perfect power of thinking. Joy is the name of a passion, in which the mind passes to a greater perfection or power of thinking; grief, one in which it passes to a less. Spinoza, in the rest of this book, deduces all the passions from these two and from desire; but as the development of his theory is rather long, and we have already seen that its basis is not quite intelligible, it will be unnecessary to dwell longer upon the subject. His analysis of the passions may be compared with that of Hobbes.

92. Such is the metaphysical theory of Spinoza, in as concise a form as I have found myself able to derive it from his *Ethics*. It is a remarkable proof, and his moral system will furnish another, how an undeviating adherence to strict reasoning may lead a man of great acuteness and sincerity from the paths of truth. Spinoza was truly what Voltaire has, with rather less justice, called Clarke, — a reasoning machine. A few leading theorems, too hastily taken up as axiomatic, were sufficient to make him sacrifice, with no compromise or hesitation, not only every principle of religion and moral right, but the clear intuitive notions of common sense. If there are two axioms more indisputable than any others, they are, that ourselves exist; and that our existence, simply considered, is independent of any other being. Yet both these are lost in the pantheism of Spinoza, as they had always been in that delusive revery of the imagination. In asserting that the being of the human mind consists in the idea of an existing thing presented to it, this subtle metaphysician fell into the error of the school which he most disdained, as deriving all knowledge from perception, that of the Aristotelians. And extending this confusion of consciousness with perception to the infinite substance, or substratum of particular ideas, he was led to deny it the self, or conscious personality, without which the name of Deity can only be given in a sense deceptive of the careless reader, and inconsistent with the use of language. It was an equally legitimate consequence of his original sophism to deny all moral agency, in the sense usually received, to the human mind; and even, as we have seen, to confound action and passion themselves,

in all but name, as mere phenomena in the eternal sequence of things.

93. It was one great error of Spinoza to entertain too arrogant a notion of the human faculties, in which, by dint of his own subtle demonstrations, he pretended to show a capacity of adequately comprehending the nature of what he denominated God. And this was accompanied by a rigid dogmatism, no one proposition being stated with hesitation; by a disregard of experience, at least as the basis of reasoning; and by an uniform preference of the synthetic method. Most of those, he says, who have turned their minds to those subjects have fallen into error, because they have not begun with the contemplation of the divine nature, which, both in itself and in order of knowledge, is first, but with sensible things, which ought to have been last. Hence he seems to have reckoned Bacon, and even Descartes, mistaken in their methods.

94. All pantheism must have originated in overstraining the infinity of the divine attributes till the moral part of religion was annihilated in its metaphysics. It was the corruption, or rather, if we may venture the phrase, the suicide of theism; nor could this theory have arisen, except, where we know it did arise, among those who had elevated their conceptions above the vulgar polytheism that surrounded them to a sense of the unity of the divine nature.

95. Spinoza does not essentially differ from the pantheists of old. He conceived, as they had done, that the infinity of God required the exclusion of all other substance; that he was infinite *ab omni parte*, and not only in certain senses. And probably the loose and hyperbolical tenets of the schoolmen, derived from ancient philosophy, ascribing, as a matter of course, a metaphysical infinity to all the divine attributes, might appear to sanction those primary positions, from which Spinoza, unfettered by religion, even in outward profession, went on "sounding his dim and perilous track" to the paradoxes that have thrown discredit on his name. He had certainly built much on the notion that the essence or definition of the Deity involved his actuality or existence, to which Descartes had given vogue.

96. Notwithstanding the leading errors of this philosopher, his clear and acute understanding perceived many things which baffle ordinary minds. Thus he well saw and well

stated the immateriality of thought. Oldenburg, in one of his letters, had demurred to this, and reminded Spinoza that it was still controverted whether thought might not be a bodily motion. "Be it so," replied the other, "though I am far from admitting it; but at least you must allow that extension, so far as extension, is not the same as thought."<sup>1</sup> It is from inattention to this simple truth that all materialism, as it has been called, has sprung. Its advocates confound the union between thinking and extension or matter (be it, if they will, an indissoluble one) with the identity of the two, which is absurd and inconceivable. "Body," says Spinoza, in one of his definitions, "is not terminated by thinking, nor thinking by body."<sup>2</sup> This, also, does not ill express the fundamental difference of matter and mind: there is an incommensurability about them, which prevents one from bounding the other, because they can never be placed in juxtaposition.

97. England, about the era of the Restoration, began to make a struggle against the metaphysical creed of the Aristotelians, as well as against their natural philosophy. A remarkable work, but one so scarce as to be hardly known at all, except by name, was published by Glanvil in 1661, with the title, *The Vanity of Dogmatizing*. A second edition, in 1665, considerably altered, is entitled *Scep sis Scientifica*.<sup>3</sup> This edition has a dedication to the Royal Society, which comes in place of a fanciful preface, wherein he had expatiated on the bodily and mental perfections of his protoplast, the father of mankind.<sup>4</sup> But in proportion to the extravagant language he employs to extol Adam before his lapse is the depreciation of his unfortunate

Glanvil's  
Scep sis  
Scientifica.

<sup>1</sup> "Atque, forte cogitatio est actus corporis. Sed, quamvis nullus concedam; vel hoc unum non negabis, extensionem quoad extensionem, non esse cogitationem." — Epist. iv.

<sup>2</sup> "Corpus dicitur finitum, quia aliud semper majus concipimus. Sic cogitatio illa cogitatione terminatur. At corpus non terminatur cogitatione, nec cogitatio corpore."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This book, I believe, especially in the second edition, is exceedingly scarce. The editors, however, of the *Biographia Britannica*, art. "Glanvil," had seen it, and also Hughald Stewart. The first edition, or *Vanity of Dogmatizing*, is in the Bodleian Catalogue; and both are in the British Museum.

<sup>4</sup> Thus, among other extravagances wor-

thy of the Talmud, he says, "Adam needed no spectacles. The acuteness of his natural optics (if conjecture may have credit, showed him much of the celestial magnificence and bravery without a Galileo's tube; and it is most probable that his naked eyes could reach near as much of this upper world as we with all the advantages of art. It may be it was as absurd, even in the judgment of his senses, that the sun and stars should be so very much less than this globe, as the contrary seems in ours; and it is not unlikely that he had as clear a perception of the earth's motion as we have of its quiescence." — p. 5, edit. 1661. In the second edition, he still adheres to the hypothesis of intellectual degeneracy, but states it with less of rhapsody.



posterity, not, as common among theologians, with respect to their moral nature, but to their reasoning faculties. The scheme of Glanvil's book is to display the ignorance of man, and especially to censure the Peripatetic philosophy of the schools. It is, he says, captious and verbal, and yet does not adhere itself to any constant sense of words, but huddles together insignificant terms and unintelligible definitions: it deals with controversies, and seeks for no new discovery or physical truth. Nothing, he says, can be demonstrated but when the contrary is impossible; and of this there are not many instances. He launches into a strain of what may be called scepticism; but answered his purpose in combating the dogmatic spirit still unconquered in our academical schools. Glanvil had studied the new philosophy, and speaks with ardent eulogy of "that miracle of men, the illustrious Descartes." Many, if not most, of his own speculations are tinged with a Cartesian coloring. He was, however, far more sceptical than Descartes, or even than Malebranche. Some passages from so rare and so acute a work may deserve to be chosen, both for their own sakes and in order to display the revolution which was at work in speculative philosophy.

98. "In the unions which we understand, the extremes are reconciled by interceding participations of natures which have somewhat of either. But body and spirit stand at such a distance in their essential compositions, that to suppose an union of a middle construction that should partake of some of the qualities of both is unwarranted by any of our faculties, yea, most absonous to our reasons; since there is not any the least affinity betwixt length, breadth, and thickness, and apprehension, judgment, and discourse: the former of which are the most immediate results, if not essentials, of matter; the latter, of spirit."<sup>1</sup>

99. "How is it, and by what art does it (the soul) read that such an image or stroke in matter (whether that of her vehicle or of the brain, the case is the same) signifies such an object? Did we learn an alphabet in our embryo state? And how comes it to pass that we are not aware of any such congenite apprehensions? We know what we know; but do we know any more? That by diversity of motions we should spell out figures, distances, magnitudes, colors, things not re-

<sup>1</sup> *Scopæ Scientificæ*, p. 16. We have just seen something similar in *Spinoza*.

sembled by them, we must attribute to some secret deduction. But what this deduction should be, or by what medium this knowledge is advanced, is as dark as ignorance. One that hath not the knowledge of letters may see the figures, but comprehends not the meaning included in them: an infant may hear the sounds and see the motion of the lips, but hath no conception conveyed by them; not knowing what they are intended to signify. So our souls, though they might have perceived the motions and images themselves by simple sense, yet, without some implicit inference, it seems inconceivable how by that means they should apprehend their antitypes. The striking of divers filaments of the brain cannot well be supposed to represent distances, except some kind of inference be allotted us in our faculties; the concession of which will only stand us as a refuge for ignorance, when we shall meet what we would seem to shun.<sup>1</sup> Glanvil, in this forcible statement of the heterogeneity of sensations with the objects that suggest them, has but trod in the steps of the whole Cartesian school: but he did not mix this up with those crude notions that halt half-way between immaterialism and its opposite; and afterwards well exposes the theories of accounting for the memory by means of images in the brain, which, in various ways, Aristotle, Descartes, Digby, Gassendi, and Hobbes had propounded, and which we have seen so favorite a speculation of Malebranche.

100. It would be easy to quote many paragraphs of uncommon vivacity and acuteness from this forgotten treatise. The style is eminently spirited and eloquent; a little too figurative, like that of Locke, but less blamably, because Glanvil is rather destroying than building up. Every bold and original thought of others finds a willing reception in Glanvil's mind; and his confident, impetuous style gives them an air of novelty which make them pass for his own. He stands forward as a mutineer against authority, against educational prejudice, against reverence for antiquity.<sup>2</sup> No one

<sup>1</sup> Pp 22, 23.

<sup>2</sup> "Now, if we inquire the reason why the mathematics and mechanic arts have so much got the start in growth of other sciences, we shall find it probably resolved into this as one considerable cause, that their progress hath not been retarded by that reverential awe of former discoveries, which hath been so great a hindrance to theoretical improvements. For, as the

noble Lord Verulam hath noted, we have a mistaken apprehension of antiquity, calling that so which in truth is the world's nonage. 'Antiquitas sæculi est juvenus mundi.' 'Twas this vain idolizing of authors which gave birth to that silly vanity of impertinent citations, and inducing authority in things neither requiring nor deserving it. Methinks it is a pitiful piece of knowledge that can be

thinks more intrepidly for himself; and it is probable, that, even in what seems mere superstition, he had been rather misled by some paradoxical hypothesis of his own ardent genius than by slavishly treading in the steps of others.<sup>1</sup>

101. Glanvil sometimes quotes Lord Bacon; but he seems to have had the ambition of contending with the Novum Organum in some of his brilliant passages, and has really developed the doctrine of *idols* with uncommon penetration, as well as force of language. "Our initial age is like the melted wax to the prepared seal, capable of any impression from the documents of our teachers. The half-moon or cross are indifferent to its reception; and we may with equal facility write on this *rasa tabula* Turk or Christian. To determine this indifference, our first task is to learn the creed of our country, and our next to maintain it. We seldom examine our receptions more than children do their catechisms, but, by a careless greediness, swallow all at a venture. For implicit faith is a virtue where orthodoxy is the object. Some will not be at the trouble of a trial; others are scared from attempting it. If we do, 'tis not by a sunbeam or ray of light, but by a flame that is kindled by our affections, and fed by the fuel of our anticipations. And thus, like the hermit, we think the sun shines nowhere but in our cell, and all the world to be darkness but ourselves. We judge truth to be circumscribed by the confines of our belief, and the doctrines we were brought up in."<sup>2</sup> Few books, I think, are more deserving of being reprinted than the *Scepasis Scientifica* of Glanvil.

102. Another bold and able attack was made on the ancient philosophy by Glanvil in his *Plus Ultra*, or the Progress and Advancement of Knowledge since the Days of Aristotle, 1668. His tone is peremptory and imposing, animated and intrepid, such as befits a warrior in literature. Yet he was rather acute by nature than deeply versed in learning, and talks of Vieta and Descartes' algebra

learned from an index, and a poor ambition to be rich in the inventory of another's treasure. To boast a memory, the most that these pedants can aim at, is but a humble ostentation."—p. 104.

<sup>1</sup> That the fancy of one man should bind the thoughts of another, and determine them to their particular objects, will be thought impossible: which yet, if we look deeply into the matter, wants not its

probability."—p. 146. He dwells more on this; but the passage is too long to extract. It is remarkable that he supposed a subtle ether (like that of the modern mesmerists) to be the medium of communication in such cases; and had the notion of explaining these sympathetic by help of the *anima mundi*, or *mundana spirit*.

<sup>2</sup> P. 25.

so as to show he had little knowledge of the science, or of what they had done for it.<sup>1</sup> His animosity against Aristotle is unreasonable; and he was plainly an incompetent judge of that philosopher's general deserts. Of Bacon and Boyle he speaks with just eulogy. Nothing can be more free and bold than Glanvil's assertion of the privilege of judging for himself in religion;<sup>2</sup> and he had doubtless a perfect right to believe in witchcraft.

103. George Dalgarno, a native of Aberdeen, conceived, and, as it seemed to him, carried into effect, the idea of an universal language and character. His *Ars Dalgarno* *Signorum, vulgo Character Universalis et Lingua Philosophica*. Lond. 1661, is dedicated to Charles II., in this philosophical character, which must have been as great a mystery to the sovereign as to his subjects. This dedication is followed by a royal proclamation in good English, inviting all to study this useful art, which had been recommended by divers learned men, Wilkins, Wallis, Ward, and others, "judging it to be of singular use for facilitating the matter of communication and intercourse between people of different languages." The scheme of Dalgarno is fundamentally bad, in that he assumes himself, or the authors he follows, to have given a complete distribution of all things and ideas; after which his language is only an artificial scheme of symbols. It is evident, that, until objects are truly classified, a representative method of signs can only rivet and perpetuate error. We have but to look at his tabular synopsis to see that his ignorance of physics, in the largest sense of the word, renders his scheme deficient; and he has also committed the error of adopting the combinations of the ordinary alphabet, with a little help from the Greek, which, even with his slender knowledge of species, soon leave him incapable of expressing them. But Dalgarno has several acute remarks; and it deserves especially to be observed, that he anticipated the famous discovery of the Dutch philologers, namely, that all other parts of speech may be reduced to the noun, dexterously, if not successfully, resolving the verb-substantive into an affirmative particle.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Plus Ultra, pp. 24 and 68.

<sup>2</sup> p. 142.

<sup>3</sup> "Tandem nihil affuldet clarior lux; accuratius enim examinando omnium notionum analysin logicam, percepi nullam

esse particulam quæ non derivetur a nomine aliquo prædicamentali, et omnes particulas esse vere casus seu modos nominum nominantium." — p. 129. He does not seem to have arrived at this conclusion



104. Wilkins, Bishop of Chester, one of the most ingenious men of his age, published in 1668 his *Essay towards a Philosophical Language*, which has this advantage over that of Dalgarno, that it abandons the alphabet, and consequently admits of a greater variety of characters. It is not a new language, but a more analytical scheme of characters for English. Dalgarno seems to have known something of it, though he was the first to publish, and glances at "a more difficult way of writing English." Wilkins also intimates, that Dalgarno's compendious method would not succeed. His own has the same fault of a premature classification of things; and it is very fortunate that neither of these ingenious but presumptuous attempts to fasten down the progressive powers of the human mind by the cramps of association had the least success.<sup>1</sup>

105. But, from these partial and now very obscure endeavors of English writers in metaphysical philosophy, we come at length to the work that has eclipsed every other, and given to such inquiries whatever popularity they ever possessed,—the *Essay of Locke on the Human Understanding*. Neither the writings of Descartes, as I conceive, nor perhaps those of Hobbes, so far as strictly metaphysical, had excited much attention in England beyond the class of merely studious men. But the *Essay on Human Understanding* was frequently reprinted within a few years from its publication, and became the acknowledged code of English philosophy.<sup>2</sup> The assaults it had to endure in the author's lifetime, being deemed to fail, were of service to its reputation; and considerably more than

Locke on  
Human  
Under-  
standing.

Its merits.

by etymological analysis, but by his own logical theories.

The verb-substantive, he says, is equivalent to *ita*. Thus, "*Petrus est in domo*" means, "*Petrus—ita—in domo*;" that is, it expresses an idea of apposition or conformity between a subject and predicate. This is a theory to which a man might be led by the habit of considering propositions logically, and thus reducing all verbs to the verb-substantive; and it is not deficient, at least, in plausibility.

<sup>1</sup> Dalgarno, many years afterwards, turned his attention to a subject of no slight interest, even in mere philosophy,—the instruction of the deaf and dumb. His *Didascalocophus* is perhaps the first attempt to found this on the analysis of language; but it is not so philosophical as what has since been effected.

<sup>2</sup> It was abridged at Oxford, and used by some tutors as early as 1686. But the heads of the university came afterwards to a resolution to discourage the reading of it. Stillington, among many others, wrote against the *Essay*. and Locke, as is well known, answered the bishop. I do not know that the latter makes altogether so poor a figure as has been taken for granted; but the defence of Locke will seem in most instances satisfactory. His success in public opinion contributed much to the renown of his work: for Stillington, though not at all conspicuous as a philosopher, enjoyed a great deal of reputation; and the world can well understand why a man who wielded in one province of literature should fall in with another.

half a century was afterwards to elapse before any writer in our language (nor was the case very different in France, after the patronage accorded to it by Voltaire) could with much chance of success question any leading doctrine of its author. Several circumstances no doubt conspired with its intrinsic excellence to establish so paramount a rule in an age that boasted of peculiar independence of thinking, and full of intelligent and inquisitive spirits. The sympathy of an English public with Locke's tenets as to government and religion was among the chief of these; and the re-action that took place in a large portion of the reading classes towards the close of the eighteenth century turned in some measure the tide even in metaphysical disquisition. It then became fashionable sometimes to accuse Locke of preparing the way for scepticism; a charge which, if it had been truly applicable to some of his opinions, ought rather to have been made against the long line of earlier writers with whom he held them in common; sometimes, with more pretence, to allege that he had conceded too much to materialism; sometimes to point out and exaggerate other faults and errors of his Essay, till we have seemed in danger of forgetting that it is perhaps the first, and still the most complete, chart of the human mind which has been laid down, the most ample repertory of truths relating to our intellectual being, and the one book which we are still compelled to name as the most important in metaphysical science.<sup>1</sup> Locke had not, it may be said, the luminous perspicacity of language we find in Descartes, and, when he does not soar too high, in Malebranche; but he had more judgment, more caution, more patience, more freedom from paradox, and from the sources of paradox, vanity, and love of system, than either. We have no denial of sensation to

<sup>1</sup> [The first endeavor completely to analyze the operations of the human understanding was made by Hobbes, in his *Treatise of Human Nature*: for, important as are the services of Descartes to psychology, he did not attempt to give a full scheme. Gassendi, in his different writings, especially in the *Synagoga Philosophicum*, seems to have had as extensive an object in view; but his investigation was neither so close, nor perhaps so complete, as that of our countryman. Yet, even in this remarkable work of Hobbes, we find accounts of some principal faculties of the mind, so brief and unsatisfactory, and so much wholly omitted, that Locke can hardly be denied the praise of

having first gone painfully over the whole ground, and, as far as the merely intellectual part of man is concerned, explained in a great degree the various phenomena of his nature and the sources of his knowledge. Much allowance ought to be made by every candid reader for the defects of a book which was written with so little aid from earlier inquirers, and displays throughout so many traces of an original mind. The bearings in our first voyages of discovery were not all laid down as correctly as at present. It is not pleasant to observe, that neither on the Continent nor, what is much worse, in Britain, has sufficient regard been paid to this consideration — 1847.]

brutes, no reference of mathematical truths to the will of God, no oscillation between the extremes of doubt and of positiveness, no bewildering mysticism. Certainly neither Gassendi nor even Hobbes could be compared with him; and it might be asked of the admirers of later philosophers, those of Berkeley or Hume or Hartley or Reid or Stewart or Brown, without naming any on the continent of Europe, whether, in the extent or originality of their researches, any of these names ought to stand on a level with that of Locke. One of the greatest whom I have mentioned, and one who, though candid towards Locke, had no prejudice whatever in his favor, has extolled the first two books of the *Essay on Human Understanding*, which yet he deems in many respects inferior to the third and fourth, as "a precious accession to the theory of the human mind; as the richest contribution of well-observed and well-described facts which was ever bequeathed by a single individual; and as the indisputable, though not always acknowledged, source of some of the most refined conclusions, with respect to the intellectual phenomena, which have been since brought to light by succeeding inquirers."<sup>1</sup>

106. It would be an unnecessary prolixity to offer in this place an analysis of so well-known a book as the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. Few have turned their attention to metaphysical inquiries without reading it. It has, however, no inconsiderable faults, which, though much over-balanced, are not to be passed over in a general eulogy. The style of Locke is wanting in philosophical precision: it is a good model of the English language, but too idiomatic and colloquial, too indefinite and figurative, for the abstruse subjects with which he has to deal. We miss in every page the translucent simplicity of his great French predecessors. This seems to have been owing, in a considerable degree, to an excessive desire of popularizing the subject, and shunning the technical pedantry which had repelled the

<sup>1</sup> Stewart's *Preliminary Dissertation to the Encyclopedia Britannica*, part ii.

(No one seems to have so much anticipated Locke, if we can wholly rely on the analysis of a work unpublished, and said to be now lost, as Father Paul Serpi. This is a short treatise, entitled *Arte di Ben Pensare*, an extract from the analysis of which by Marco Foscarini is given in Serpi's *Life*, by Bianchi Giovini, vol. i. p. 81. We have here not only the derivation of Ideas from sense, but from reflection:

the same theory as to substances, the formation of genera and species, the association of Ideas, the same views as to axioms and syllogisms. But as the Italian who has given us this representation of Father Paul's philosophy had Locke before him, and does not quote his own author's words, we may suspect that he has somewhat exaggerated the resemblance. I do not think that any nation is more prone to claim every feather from the wings of other birds. — 1847.]

world from intellectual philosophy. Locke displays in all his writings a respect, which can hardly be too great, for men of sound understanding, unprejudiced by authority, mingled with a scorn, perhaps a little exaggerated, of the gown-men or learned world; little suspecting that the same appeal to the people, the same policy of setting up equivocal words and loose notions, called the common sense of mankind, to discomfit subtle reasoning, would afterwards be turned against himself, as it was, very unfairly and unsparingly, by Reid and Beattie. Hence he falls a little into a laxity of phrase, not unusual, and not always important, in popular and practical discourse, but an inevitable source of confusion in the very abstract speculations which his Essay contains. And it may, perhaps, be suspected, without disparagement to his great powers, that he did not always preserve the utmost distinctness of conception, and was liable, as almost every other metaphysician has been, to be entangled in the ambiguities of language.

107. The leading doctrine of Locke, as is well known, is the derivation of all our *simple* ideas from sensation and from reflection. The former present, comparatively, no great difficulty; but he is not very clear or consistent about the latter. He seems in general to limit the word to the various operations of our own minds in thinking, believing, willing, and so forth. This, as has been shown formerly, is taken from, or at least coincident with, the theory of Gassendi in his *Syntagma Philosophicum*. It is highly probable that Locke was acquainted with that work; if not immediately, yet through the account of the philosophy of Gassendi, published in English by Dr. Charleton in 1663, which I have not seen, or through the excellent and copious abridgment of the *Syntagma* by Bernier. But he does not strictly confine his ideas of reflection to this class. Duration is certainly no mode of thinking; yet the idea of duration is reckoned by Locke among those with which we are furnished by reflection. The same may perhaps be said, though I do not know that he expresses himself with equal clearness, as to his account of several other ideas, which cannot be deduced from external sensation, nor yet can be reckoned modifications or operations of the soul itself; such as number, power, existence.<sup>1</sup>

Origin of  
ideas, ac-  
cording to  
Locke.

<sup>1</sup> [Upon more attentive consideration of all the passages wherein Locke speaks of ideas derived from reflection, I enter- tain no doubt but that Stewart is right, and some of Locke's opponents in the wrong. He evidently meant, that by re-



108. Stewart has been so much struck by this indefiniteness, with which the phrase "ideas of reflection" has been used in the Essay on the Human Understanding, that he "does not think, notwithstanding some casual expressions which may seem to favor the con-

ceiving on the operations of our own minds as well as on our bodily sensations, diverse new simple ideas are suggested to us, which are not in themselves either such operations or such sensations. These "simple ideas convey themselves into the mind by all the ways of sensation and reflection;" and he enumerates pleasure and pain, power, existence, unity; to which he afterwards adds duration. "Reflection on the appearance of several ideas, one after another, in our minds, is that which furnishes us with the idea of succession; and the distance between any parts of that succession, or between the appearance of new ideas in our minds, is that we call duration."—B. II. ch. 14, § 8. So of number, or unity, which he takes for the basis of the idea of number. "Amongst all the ideas we have, as there is none suggested to the mind by more ways, so is there none more simple than that of unity, or one: it has no shadow of variety or composition in it; every object our senses are employed about, every idea in our understandings, every thought of our minds, brings this idea along with it."—ch. x. § 1. Thus we have proofs, and more might easily be alleged, that Locke really admitted the understanding to be so far the source of new simple ideas, that several of primary importance arise in our minds, on the suggestion of the senses, or of our observing the inward operations of our minds, which are not strictly to be classed themselves as suggestions, or as acts of consciousness. And when we remember also, that the power of the understanding to compound simple ideas is a leading part of his system, and also that certain ideas, which others take for simple, are reckoned by him, whether rightly or no, to be complex, we may be forced to admit, that the outcry raised against Locke as a teacher of the sensualist school has been chiefly founded on inattention to his language, and to some inaccuracy in it. Stewart had already stated the true doctrine as to ideas of reflection. "In such cases, all that can be said is, that the exercise of a particular faculty furnishes the occasion on which certain simple notions are, by the laws of our constitution, presented to our thoughts; nor does it seem possible for us to trace the origin of a particular notion any farther, than to ascertain what the nature of the occasion

was, which, in the first instance, introduced it to our acquaintance."—*Philos. Essays*, I. chap. II. It is true, that he proceeds to impute a different theory to Locke; namely, that consciousness is exclusively the source of all our knowledge; which he takes to mean, that all our original ideas may be classed under acts of consciousness, as well as suggested by it. But, in his *Disertation*, we have seen that he takes a more favorable view of the Essay on the Human Understanding in this great question of the origin of our ideas, and, as it now appears to me, beyond dispute a more true one. The want of precision, so unhappily characteristic of Locke, has led to this misapprehension of his meaning; but surely no one can believe, hardly the most deprecating critic of Locke at Paris or Oxford, that he took duration and number for actual operations of the mind, such as doubting or comparing. Price had long since admitted, that Locke had no other meaning than that our ideas are derived, immediately or ultimately, from sensation or reflection; or, in other words, "that they furnish us with all the subjects, materials, and occasions of knowledge, comparison, and internal perception." This, however, by no means renders them in any proper sense the source of all our ideas."—*Price's Disertations on Morals*, p. 18.

Cousin enumerates, as simple ideas not derived from sensation or reflection, space, duration, infinity, identity, substance, cause, and right. Locke would have replied, that the idea of space, as mere definite extension, was derived from sensation; and that of space generally, or what he has called expansion, was not simple, but complex; that those of duration, cause (or power), and identity, were furnished by reflection; that the idea of right is not simple, and that those of substance and infinity are hardly formed by the mind at all. He would add existence and unity to the list; both, according to him, derived from reflection.

M. Cousin has by no means done justice to Locke as to the idea of cause. "On sait que Locke, après avoir affirmé dans un chapitre sur l'idée de cause et d'effet, que cette idée nous est donnée par la sensation, s'avisé, dans un chapitre différent sur la puissance, d'une toute autre origine, bien qu'il s'agisse, au fond, de la même

trary supposition, that Locke would have hesitated for a moment to admit with Cudworth and Price, that the understanding is the source of new ideas."<sup>1</sup> And though some might object that this is too much in opposition, not to casual expressions, but to the whole tenor of Locke's Essay, his language concerning substance almost bears it out. Most of the perplexity which has arisen on this subject, the combats of some metaphysicians with Locke, the portentous errors into which others have been led by want of attention to his language, may be referred to the equivocal meaning of the word "idea." The Cartesians understood by this whatever is the object of thought, including an intellection as well as an imagination. By an intellection they meant that which the mind conceives to exist, and to be the subject of knowledge, though it may be unimaginable and incomprehensible. Gassendi and Locke (at least in this part of his Essay) limit the word "idea" to something which the mind sees and grasps as immediately present to it,—“that,” as Locke not very well expresses it, “which the mind is applied about while thinking being the ideas that are there.” Hence he speaks with some ridicule of “men who persuade themselves that they have clear, comprehensive ideas of infinity.” Such men can hardly have existed; but it is by annexing the epithets clear and comprehensive, that he shows the dispute to be merely verbal. For that we know the existence of infinites as objectively real, and can reason upon them, Locke would not have denied; and it is this knowledge to which others gave the name of idea.

109. The different manner in which this all-important word was understood by philosophers is strikingly shown when they make use of the same illustration. Arnauld, if he is author of *L'Art de Penser*, mentions the idea of a chilia-

*Idee, il trouve cette origine nouvelle dans la reflexion appliquée à la volonté,*” &c. — *Fragmens Philosophiques*, p. 83. Now, in the first place, the chapter on Power, in the Essay on the Human Understanding, B. ii. ch. 21, comes before and not after that on Cause and Effect, ch. 26. But it is more important to observe, that in the latter chapter, and at the close of the 25th, Locke distinctly says, that the idea is “derived from the two fountains of all our knowledge, sensation and reflection;” and “that this relation, how comprehensible soever, terminates at last in them.” It is also to be kept in mind that he is

here speaking of physical causes, but, in his chapter on Power, of efficient ones, and principally of the human mind; intimating also his opinion, that matter is destitute of active power, that is, of efficient causation. The form *on suit* is, as *on suit*, a common mode of introducing any questionable position. It does not follow from this, that Locke's expressions in the 26th chapter, on Cause and Effect, are altogether the best; but they must be considered in connection with his long chapter on Power. — 1847.]

<sup>1</sup> Prelim. Dissertation.

gon, or figure of 1,000 sides, as an instance of the distinction between that which we imagine and that which we conceive or understand. Locke has employed the same instance to exemplify the difference between clear and obscure ideas. According to the former, we do not imagine a figure with 1,000 sides at all: according to the latter, we form a confused image of it. We have an idea of such a figure, it is agreed by both: but, in the sense of Arnauld, it is an idea of the understanding alone; in the sense of Locke, it is an idea of sensation, framed, like other complex ideas, by putting together those we have formerly received, though we may never have seen the precise figure. That the word suggests to the mind an image of a polygon with many sides is indubitable: but it is urged by the Cartesians, that, as we are wholly incapable of distinguishing the exact number, we cannot be said to have, in Locke's sense of the word, any idea, even an indistinct one, of a figure with 1,000 sides; since all we do imagine is a polygon. And it is evident, that in geometry we do not reason from the properties of the image, but from those of a figure which the understanding apprehends. Locke, however, who generally preferred a popular meaning to one more metaphysically exact, thought it enough to call this a confused idea. He was not, I believe, conversant with any but elementary geometry. Had he reflected upon that which in his age had made such a wonderful beginning, or even upon the fundamental principles of it, which might be found in Euclid, the theory of infinitesimal quantities, he must, one would suppose, have been more puzzled to apply his narrow definition of an idea. For what image can we form of a differential, which can pretend to represent it in any other sense than as  $dx$  represents it, by suggestion, not by resemblance?

110. The case is, however, much worse when Locke deviates, as in the third and fourth books he constantly does, from this sense that he has put on the word "idea," and takes it either in the Cartesian meaning, or in one still more general and popular. Thus, in the excellent chapter on the abuse of words, he insists upon the advantage of using none without clear and distinct ideas; he who does not this "only making a noise without any sense or signification." If we combine this position with that in the second book, that we have no clear and distinct idea of a figure with 1,000 sides, it fol-

lows with all the force of syllogism, that we should not argue about a figure of 1,000 sides at all, nor, by parity of reason, about many other things of far higher importance. It will be found, I incline to think, that the large use of the word "idea" for that about which we have some knowledge, without limiting it to what can be imagined, pervades the third and fourth books. Stewart has ingeniously conjectured that they were written before the second, and probably before the mind of Locke had been much turned to the psychological analysis which that contains. It is, however, certain, that in the *Treatise upon the Conduct of the Understanding*, which was not published till after the *Essay*, he uses the word "idea" with full as much latitude as in the third and fourth books of the latter. We cannot, upon the whole, help admitting, that the story of a lady, who, after the perusal of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, laid it down with a remark, that the book would be perfectly charming were it not for the frequent recurrence of one very hard word, *idea*, though told, possibly, in ridicule of the fair philosopher, pretty well represents the state of mind in which many at first have found themselves.<sup>1</sup>

111. Locke, as I have just intimated, seems to have possessed but a slight knowledge of geometry, — a science which, both from the clearness of the illustrations it affords, and from its admitted efficacy in rendering the logical powers acute and cautious, may be reckoned, without excepting physiology, the most valuable of all to the metaphysician. But it did not require any geometrical knowledge, strictly so called, to avoid one material error into which he has fallen; and which I mention the

An error as to geometrical figure.

<sup>1</sup> [The character of Locke's philosophical style, as given by a living philosopher, by no means favorable to him, is perhaps too good the truth. "In his language, Locke is, of all philosophers, the most figurative, ambiguous, vacillating, various, and even contradictory, as has been noticed by Reid and Stewart, and by Brown himself; indeed, we believe, by every author who has had occasion to comment on this philosopher. The opinions of such a writer are not, therefore, to be assumed from isolated and casual expressions, which themselves require to be interpreted on the general analogy of his system." — *Edin. Rev.* (Sir William Hamilton), vol. III. p. 189. I am happy to cite another late

writer of high authority. In favor of the general character of Locke as a philosopher. "Few among the great names in philosophy," says Mr. Mill, "have met with a harder measure of justice from the present generation than Locke, the unquestioned founder of the analytical philosophy of mind." Perhaps Descartes and Hobbes, not to mention Gassendi, might contest the palm as founders of psychological analysis; but Mr. Mill justly gives to Locke the preference over Hobbes, who has been sometimes overrated of late, "not only in sober judgment, but even in profanity and original genius." — *System of Logic*, vol. I. p. 160. — 1847.]



rather, because even Descartes, in one place, has said something of the same kind; and I have met with it not only in Norris very distinctly and positively, but, more or less, in many or most of those who have treated of the metaphysics or abstract principles of geometry. "I doubt not," says Locke,<sup>1</sup> "but it will be easily granted, that the knowledge we have of mathematical truths is not only certain but real knowledge, and not the bare, empty vision of vain, insignificant chimeras of the brain; and yet, if we well consider, we shall find that it is only of our own ideas. The mathematician considers the truth and properties belonging to a rectangle or circle only as they are in idea in his own mind; for it is possible he never found either of them existing mathematically, that is, precisely true, in his life. . . . All the discourses of the mathematicians about the squaring of a circle, conic sections, or any other part of mathematics, concern not the existence of any of those figures; but their demonstrations, which depend on their ideas, are the same, whether there be any square or circle in the world or no." And the inference he draws from this is, that moral as well as mathematical ideas, being archetypes themselves, and so adequate and complete ideas, all the agreement or disagreement which he shall find in them will produce real knowledge, as well as in mathematical figures.

112. It is not perhaps necessary to inquire how far, upon the hypothesis of Berkeley, this notion of mathematical figures, as mere creations of the mind, could be sustained; but on the supposition of the objectivity of space, as truly existing without us, which Locke undoubtedly assumes, it is certain, that the passage just quoted is entirely erroneous, and that it involves a confusion between the geometrical figure itself and its delineation to the eye. A geometrical figure is a portion of space contained in boundaries, determined by given relations. It exists in the infinite round about us, as the statue exists in the block.<sup>2</sup> No one can doubt, if he turns

<sup>1</sup> B. IV. c. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Angelo has well conveyed this idea in four lines, which I quote from Corniand:—

"Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto,  
Che un marmo solo in se non circonseriva  
Col suo soverchio, e solo a quello arriva  
La mano che obbedisce all' intelletto."

The geometer uses not the same obedient

hand, but he equally feels and perceives the reality of that figure which the broad infinite around him comprehends *col suo soverchio*.

[Uccero has a similar expression: "Quasi non in omni marmore natus: ut fuisse vel Praxitella capita! Illo enim ipsa effunditur detractio." — *De Divinatione*, § 21. — 1842.]

his mind to the subject, that every point in space is equidistant, in all directions, from certain other points. Draw a line through all these, and you have the circumference of a circle; but the circle itself and its circumference exist before the latter is delineated. Thus the orbit of a planet is not a regular geometrical figure, because certain forces disturb it. But this disturbance means only a deviation from a line which exists really in space, and which the planet would actually describe if there were nothing in the universe but itself and the centre of attraction. The expression, therefore, of Locke, "whether there be any square or circle existing in the world or no," is highly inaccurate; the latter alternative being an absurdity. All possible figures, and that "in number numberless," exist everywhere: nor can we evade the perplexities into which the geometry of infinites throws our imagination, by considering them as mere beings of reason, the creatures of the geometer, which I believe some are half disposed to do; nor by substituting the vague and unphilosophical notion of indefinitude for a positive objective infinity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [The confusion, as it appears to me, between sensible and real figure in geometry, I have found much more general in philosophical writers than I was aware of when this passage was first committed to the press. Thus M. Cousin: "Il n'existe, dans la nature, que des figures imparfaites, et la géométrie a pour condition d'opérer sur des figures parfaites, sur le triangle parfait, le cercle parfait, &c.; c'est à dire, sur des figures qui n'ont pas d'existence réelle, et qui sont des pures conceptions de l'esprit."—Hist. de la Philos., vol. II. p. 311. If by figure we mean only visible circumference, this is very true. But the geometer generally reasons, not upon the boundaries, but upon the extension, superficial or solid, comprehended within them; and to this extension itself we usually give the name of figure. Again: "It is not true," says Mr. Mill, "that a circle exists, or can be described, which has all its radii exactly equal."—System of Logic, vol. I. p. 200. Certainly such a circle cannot be described: but in every geometrical sense it really exists. Hence he asserts "the character of necessity, ascribed to mathematics, to be a mere illusion; nothing exists conformable to the definitions, nor is even possible."—p. 296. It follows, of course, that a straight line is impossible; which is perfectly true, if it must be drawn with a ruler. But is it not surprising that so acute a writer as Mr. Mill can think any thing impossible,

in a metaphysical sense, which implies no contradiction, and is easily conceived? He must have used possible in a sense limited to human execution.

Another eminent reasoner has gone the full length of this paradox. "It has been rightly remarked by Dugald Stewart, that mathematical propositions are not properly true or false, in the same sense as any proposition respecting real fact is so called: and hence the truth, such as it is, of such propositions is necessary and eternal; since it amounts only to this, that any complex notion which you have arbitrarily formed must be exactly conformable to itself."—Whately's Elements of Logic, 3d edit., p. 229. And thus a celebrated writer who began in that school, though he has since traversed the diameter of theology: "We are able to define the creations of our own minds, for they are what we make them; but it were as easy to create what is real, as to define it."—Newman's Sermons before the University of Oxford, p. 383.

The only meaning we can put on such assertions is, that geometry is a mere pastime of the mind, an exercise of logic, in which we have only to take care that we assign no other properties to the imaginary figures which answer to the syllogistic letters, A, B, and C, than such as are contained in their definition, without any objective truth whatever, or relation to a real external universe. The perplexities into

## 119. The distinction between ideas of mere sensation and those of intellection, between what the mind comprehends

which mathematicians have been thrown by the metaphysical difficulties of their science must appear truly ludicrous, and such as they have manufactured for themselves. But the most singular circumstance of all is, that nature is regulated by these arbitrary definitions; and that the truths of geometry, *such as they are*, enable us to predict the return of Uranus or Neptune to the same place in the heavens after the present generation are in their graves. A comet leaves its perihelion, and pursues its path through the remote regions of space: the astronomer foretells its return by the laws of a geometrical figure, and, if it come a few days only before the calculated moment, has recourse to the hypothesis of some resistance which has diminished its orbit; so sure is he that the projectile force, and that of gravity, act in lines geometrically straight.

The source of this paradox appears to be a too hasty and rather inaccurate assumption, that geometry depends upon definitions. But, though we cannot argue except according to our definitions, the real subject of the science is not those terms, but the properties of the things defined. We conceive a perfect circle to be not only a possible but a real figure: that its radii are equal, belongs to the idea, not to the words by which we define it. Men might reason by themselves on geometry without any definitions: or, if they could not, the truths of the science would be the same.

The universal and necessary belief of mankind is, that we are placed in the midst of an unbounded ocean of space. On all sides of us, and in three dimensions, this is spread around. We cannot conceive it to be annihilated, or to have had a beginning. Innumerable objects of our senses, themselves extended, that is, occupying portions of this space, but portions not always the same, float within it. And as we find other properties than mere extension in these objects, by which properties alone they are distinguishable from the surrounding space, we denominate them bodies, or material substances. Considered in its distinction from this space, their own proper extension has boundaries by which they come under the relation of figure: and thus all bodies are figured. But we do not necessarily limit this word to material substances. The mind is not only perfectly capable of considering geometrical figures, that is, particular portions of the continuous extension which we call absolute space, by themselves, as measured by the mutual distances of their

boundaries, but is intuitively certain that such figures are real, that extension is divisible into parts, and that there must be everywhere in the surrounding expanse triangles and circles mathematically exact, though any diagram which we can delineate will be more or less incorrect. "Space," says Sir John Herschel (if we may name him), "in its ultimate analysis, is nothing but an assemblage of distances and directions." — *Quarterly Review*, June, 1847, quoted in Mill's *Cogitation*, I. 324. This is very forcibly expressed, if not with absolute precision; for distance is perhaps, in strictness, rather the measure of space than space itself. It is suggested by every extended body, the boundaries whereof must be distant one from another; and it is suggested also by the separation of these bodies, which, when not in contact, are perceived to have intervals between them. But these intervals are not necessarily filled by other bodies, nor even by light: as when we perceive stars, and estimate their distances from one another, in a moonless night. The mere ideas of distance and direction seem to be simple, or rather modes of the simple idea extension; and for this reason no definition can be given of a straight line. It is the measure of distance itself; which the mind intuitively apprehends to be but one, and that the shortest line which can be drawn.

"The only clear notion," says Herschel, "we can form of straightness, is uniformity of direction." And as the line itself is only imaginary, or, if it be drawn, is but the representative of distance of length, it cannot have, as such, any other dimension. Though we know that a material line must have breadth, it is not a mere abstraction of the geometer to say, that the distance of an object from the eye has no breadth; but it would be absurd to say the contrary.

The definition of a mathematical figure involves only its possibility. But our knowledge of extension itself, as objectively real, renders all figures true beings, not *entia rationis*, but actual beings, portions of one infinite continuous extension. They exist in space, to repeat the metaphor (which indeed is no metaphor, but an instance), as the statue exists in the block. Extension, perhaps, and figure, are rather the conditions under which bodies, whatever else they may be, are presented to our senses, than, in perfect strictness of expression, the essentials of body itself. They have been called by Stewart the mathematical properties of matter. Certain it is that they remain when the body is displaced, and would remain were it

and what it conceives without comprehending, is the point of divergence between the two sects of psychology which still

annihilated. And it is with the relation of bodies to space absolute that the geometer has to deal; never, in his pure science, with their material properties.

What, then, is the meaning of what we sometimes read, that there is no such thing as a circle or a triangle in nature? If we are to understand the physical universe, the material world, which is the common sense, this may perhaps be true; but what, then, has the geometer to do with nature? If we include absolute space under the word "nature," I must entirely deny the assertion. Can we doubt that portions of space, or points, exist in every direction at the same distance from any other assignable point or portion of space? I cannot draw a radius precisely a foot long; but I can draw a line more than eleven inches in length, and can produce this till it is more than twelve. At some point or other, it has been exactly the length of a foot. The want of precise uniformity of direction may be overcome in the same way: there is a series of points along which the line might have been directed, so as to be perfectly uniform; just as in the orbit of a planet round the sun, disturbed as it is by the attraction of a third body at every point, there is yet at every point a line, called the instantaneous ellipse, along which the path of the body might by possibility have proceeded in a geometrical curve. Let the mind once fix itself on the idea of continuous extension, and its divisibility into parts mathematically equal, or in mathematical ratios, must appear necessary.

Geometry, then, is not a science of reasoning upon definitions, such as we please to conceive, but on the relations of space.—of space, an objective being, according at least to human conceptions; space, the bosom of nature, that which alone makes all things sensibly without us; made known to us by a primary law of the understanding, as some hold; by experience of sensation, or inference from it, as others maintain; but necessary, eternal, the basis of such demonstration as no other science possesses; because in no other do we perceive an absolute impossibility, an impossibility paramount, speaking reverently, to the Creator's will, that the premises of our reasoning might have been different from what they are. The definitions of geometrical figures no more constitute their essence than those of a plant or a mineral. Whether geometrical reasoning is built on the relations of parts of space, merely as defined in words, is another question: it certainly appears to me, that definitions supply only

the terms of the proposition, and that without a knowledge, verbal or implied, of the axioms, we could not deduce any conclusions at all. But this affects only the logic of the theorem, the process by which the relations of space are unfolded to the human understanding. I cannot, for a moment, believe that the distinguished philosopher, who has strenuously argued for the deduction of geometry from definitions, meant any more than to oppose them to axioms. That they are purely arbitrary, that they are the creatures of the mind, like harpies and chimeras, he could hardly have thought; being himself habituated to geometrical studies. But the language of Stewart is not sufficiently guarded; and he has served as an authority to those who have uttered so singular a paradox. "From what principle," says Stewart, "are the various properties of the circle derived, but from the definition of a circle? from what principle the properties of the parabola or ellipse, but from the definitions of these curves? A similar observation may be extended to all the other theorems which the mathematician demonstrates."—Vol. ii. p. 41. The properties of a circle or the other curves, we answer, are derived from that leading property which we express in the definition. But surely we can make use of no definition which does not declare a real property. We might impose a name on a quadrilateral figure with equal angles and sides not parallel; but could we draw an inference from it? And why could we not, but because we should be restrained by its incompatibility with our necessary conceptions of the relations of space? It is these primary conceptions to which our definitions must conform. Definitions of figure, at least in all but the most familiar, are indispensable, in order to make us apprehend particular relations of distance, and to keep our reasoning clear from confusion; but this is only the common province of language.

In this I have the satisfaction of finding myself supported by the authority of Dr. Whewell. "Supposing," he observes in his *Thoughts on the Study of the Mathematics*, "we could get rid of geometrical axioms altogether, and deduce our reasoning from definitions alone, it must be allowed, I think, that still our geometrical propositions would probably depend not on the definitions, but on the act of mind by which we fix upon such definitions: in short, on our conception of space. The axiom, that two straight lines cannot enclose space, is a self-evident truth, and founded upon our faculty of apprehending



exist in the world. Nothing is in the intellect which has not before been in the sense, said the Aristotelian schoolmen.

the properties of space, and of conceiving a straight line. . . . We should present a false view of the nature of geometrical truth if we were to represent it as resting upon definitions, and should overlook or deny the faculty of the mind, and the intellectual process which is implied in our fixing upon such definitions. The foundation of all the properties of straight lines is certainly not the definition, but the conception of a straight line: and, in the same manner, the foundation of all geometrical truth resides in our general conceptions of space."—p. 151.

That mathematical truths (a position of Stewart commended by Whately) are not properly called matters of fact, is no new distinction. They are not *vera*; they have no being in time, as matters of fact have; they are *eterna*, beings of a higher order than any facts, but still realities, and, as some philosophers have held, more truly real than any created essence. But Archbishop Whately is a nominalist of the school of Hobbes. Mr. Mill, who is an avowed conceptualist, has said: "Every proposition which conveys real information asserts a matter of fact dependent on the laws of nature, and not upon artificial classification."—Vol. I. p. 237. But here he must use matter of fact in a loose sense; for he would certainly admit mathematical theorems to convey real information; though I do not agree with him that they are, in propriety of language, dependent on the laws of nature. He observes on the archbishop's position, that the object of reasoning is to expand the assertions wrapped up in those with which we set out, that "It is not easy to see how such a science as geometry can be said to be wrapped up in a few definitions and axioms."—p. 237. Whether this be a sufficient answer to the archbishop or no, it shows that Mr. Mill considers mathematical propositions to convey real science.

Two opposite errors are often found in modern writers on the metaphysics of geometry: the one, that which has just been dismissed,—the denial of absolute reality to mathematical truths; the other wholly opposite, yet which equally destroys their prerogative,—I mean the theory that they are only established by induction. As in the first they are no facts in any sense, not real truths, so in the other they are mere facts. But, indeed, both these opinions, divergent as they seem, emanate from the ultra-nominalist school; and they sometimes are combined in the same writer. Mr. Mill and Mr. De Morgan have lent their great authority

to the second doctrine, which was revived from Hobbes, fifty years since, by Bradley, in a tract on Demonstrative Evidence, which I have heard attributed, in part, to Professor Leslie, a supporter of the same theory. Sir William Hamilton explains upon the position of two writers in the suite of Archbishop Whately that it is by induction all axioms are known, such as "A whole is greater than its parts," "Is such the Oxford metaphysics?"—Edinb. Rev., vol. lvi. p. 232. But though the assertion seems more monstrous, when applied to such an axiom as this, it is substantially found in many writers of deserved fame; nor is it either a metaphysics of Oxford growth, or very likely to be well received there. The Oxford error at present, that at least of the dominant school, seems to be the very reverse; a strong tendency to absolute Platonic realism. This has had, cause or effect, something to do with the apothecia of the Church, which implies reality, a step to personality.

It seems to follow from this inductive theory, that we believe two straight lines not to include a space, because we have never seen them do so, or heard of any one who has; and, as mere induction is confessed to be no basis of certain truth, we must admit mathematical demonstration to differ only in degree of positive evidence from probability. As the passage in my text to which this note refers bears no relation to this second opinion, I shall not dwell upon it further than to remark, that it seems strange to hear that two straight lines are only proved by observation not to include a space, when we are told in the same breath that no straight lines exist, and consequently that any which we may take for straight would be found, on a more accurate examination, to include a space between them. But, reverting to the subject of the former part of this note, it may be observed, that our conception that two straight lines cannot include a space is a homage to the reality of geometrical figure; for experience has not given it; all we learn from experience is, that the nearer to straightness two lines are drawn, the less space they include. And even here the reasoning is in the inverse order: the less space they include, the more they approach to straight; that is, the nearer to uniformity to their direction.

In all this I have assumed the reality of space, according to the usual apprehension of mankind. With the transcendental problem, raised by the Kantian school, it seems unnecessary to meddle. We know

Every idea has its original in the senses, repeated the disciple of Epicurus, — Gassendi. Locke indeed, as Gassendi had done

at least that we acknowledge the objectivity of space by a condition of our understandings; we know that others with whom we converse have the like conceptions of it; we have every reason to believe, that inferior animals judge of extension, distance, and direction, by sensations and inferences analogous to our own; we predict the future, in calculating the motions of heavenly and terrestrial bodies, on the assumption that space is no fiction of the brain, its portions and measured distances no creations of an arbitrary definition. Locke, I am aware, in one of the miscellaneous papers published by Lord King (Life of Locke, vol. ii. p. 175), bearing the date 1671, says, "Space in itself seems to be nothing but a capacity or possibility for extended beings or bodies to be or exist;" and, "The space where a real globe of a foot diameter exists, though we imagine it to be really something, to have a real existence before and after its [the globe's] existence, there, in truth, is really nothing." And finally, "Though it be true that the black lines drawn on a rule have the relation one to another of an inch distance, they being real sensible things; and though it be also true that I, knowing the idea of an inch, can imagine that length without imagining body, as well as I can imagine a figure without imagining body, — yet it is no more true that there is any real distance in that which we call imaginary space, than that there is any real figure there." — p. 186.

I confess myself wholly at a loss how to reconcile such notions of space and distance, not only with geometry, but dynamics; the idea of velocity involving that of mere extension in a straight line, without the conception, necessarily implied, of any body except the moving one. But it is worthy of remark, that Locke appears to have modified his doctrine here delivered, before he wrote the Essay on the Human Understanding; where he argues at length, in language adapted to the common belief of the reality of space, and once only observes that some may "take it to be only a relation resulting from the existence of other beings at a distance, while others understand the words of Solomon and St. Paul in a literal sense" (b. ii. c. 13, § 27); by which singular reference to Scripture he may perhaps intimate that he does not perceive the force of the metaphysical argument. I think it not impossible that the reading of Newton, who had so emphatically pronounced himself for the real existence of absolute space, had so far an effect upon the mind of

Locke that he did not commit himself to an opposite hypothesis. Except with a very few speculative men, I believe the conviction, that space exists truly and independently around us, to be universal in mankind.

Locke was a philosopher, equally bold in following up his own inquiries, and cautious in committing them, except as mere conjectures, to the public. Perhaps an instance might be given from the remarkable anticipation of the theory of Roscoveli as to the nature of matter, which Stewart has sagaciously inferred from a passage in the Essay on the Human Understanding. But if we may trust an anecdote in the Bibliothèque Raisonnée, vol. iv. p. 354, on the authority of Cœter, the French translator of that work, Newton conceived the idea of Roscoveli's theory, and suggested it to Locke. The quotation is in the words of the translator:—

"M. Locke excita notre curiosité sans vouloir la satisfaire. Bien des gens s'étant imaginés qu'il n'avait communiqué cette manière d'expliquer la création de la matière, me prièrent, peu de temps après que ma traduction eut vu le jour, de leur en faire part; mais je fus obligé de leur avouer que M. L. n'en avait fait un secret à lui-même. Enfin, longtemps après sa mort, M. le Chevalier Newton, à qui je parlais, par hasard, de cet esprit du livre de M. Locke, me découvrit tout le mystère. Souriant, il me dit d'abord, que c'était lui-même qui avait imaginé cette manière d'expliquer la création de la matière: que la pensée lui en était venue dans l'esprit, un jour qu'il vint à tomber sur cette question avec M. L. et un seigneur Anglais plein de vie, et qui n'est pas moins illustre par l'étendue de ses lumières que par sa naissance. Et voilà comment il leur expliqua sa pensée. 'On pouvait,' dit-il, 'se former, en quelque manière, une idée de la création de la matière, en supposant que Dieu eût empêché par sa puissance, que rien ne pût entrer dans une certaine portion de l'espace pur, que, de sa nature, est pénétrable, éternel, nécessaire, infini; car dès-lors cette portion d'espace aurait l'impenétrabilité, l'une des qualités essentielles à la matière. Et comme l'espace pur est absolument uniforme, on n'a qu'à supposer que Dieu aurait communiqué cette espèce d'impenétrabilité à une autre parcelle portion de l'espace, et cela nous donnerait, en quelque sorte, une idée de la mobilité de la matière, autre qualité qui lui est aussi très-essentielle.' Nous voilà maintenant délivrés de

before him, assigned another origin to one class of ideas ; but these were few in number, and in the next century two writers of considerable influence, Hartley and Condillac, attempted to resolve them all into sensation. The ancient school of the Platonists, and even that of Descartes, who had distinguished innate ideas, or at least those spontaneously suggesting themselves on occasion of visible objects from those strictly belonging to sense, lost ground both in France and England ; nor had Leibnitz, who was deemed an enemy to some of our great English names, sufficient weight to restore it. In the hands of some who followed in both countries, the worst phrases of Locke were preferred to the best : whatever could be turned to the account of Pyrrhonism, materialism, or atheism, made a figure in the Epicurean system of a popular philosophy.<sup>1</sup> The German metaphysicians from the time of Kant deserve at least the credit of having successfully withstood this course

chercher ce que M. L. avait trouvé bon de cacher à ses lecteurs."—Bibl. Raisonné, vol. iv. p. 349.

It is unnecessary to observe what honor the conjecture of Stewart does to his sagacity : for he was not very likely to have fallen on this passage in an old review little read, nor was he a man to conceal the obligation, had he done so. The theory of Descartes, or, as we may perhaps now say, of Newton, has been lively supported, with abundance of new illustration, by the greatest genius in philosophy discovered within this age and country can boast. I will conclude with throwing out a suggestion, whether on the hypothesis that matter is only a combination of forces, attractive or repulsive, and varying in different substances or bodies, as they are vulgarly called, inasmuch as all forces are capable of being mathematically expressed, there is not a proper formula belonging to each body, though of course not assignable by us, which might be called its equation, and which, if known, would be the definition of its essence, as strictly as that of a geometrical figure.—1847.]

[“Locke,” says M. Cousin, “has certainly not confounded sensation with the faculties of the mind : he expressly distinguishes them, but he makes the latter play a secondary and insignificant part, and concentrates their action on sensible data : it was but a step from thence to confound them with sensibility ; and we have here the feeble germ of a future theory, that of transformed sensation, of sensation as the only principle of all the operations of the mind. Locke, without

knowing or designing it, has opened the road to this exclusive doctrine, by adding nothing to sensation but faculties whose whole business is to exercise themselves upon it with an peculiar or original power.”—Hist. de la Philos., vol. ii. p. 187.

If the powers of combining, comparing, and generalizing the ideas originally derived from sense are not to be called peculiar and original, this charge might be sustained. But though Locke had not the same views of the active and self-originate powers of the mind which have been taken by others, if he derived *some* ideas from sense to which a different source has been assigned, it seems too much to say that he makes the faculties play a secondary and insignificant part ; when the part he attributes to them is that of giving us all our knowledge beyond that of mere simple sense : and, to use his own analogy, being to sensation what the words of a language, in all their combinations, are to the letters which compose them. M. Cousin, and the other antagonists of Locke, will not contend that we could have had any knowledge of geometry or arithmetic without sensation ; and Locke has never supposed that we could have so much as put two ideas of extension or number together without the active powers of the mind. In this point I see no other difference between the two schools, than that one derives a few ideas from sense, which the other cannot trace to that source ; and this is hardly sufficient to warrant the depreciation of Locke as a false and dangerous guide in philosophy.—1847.]

sensualism: though they may have borrowed much that their disciples take for original, and added much that is hardly better than what they have overthrown. France has also made a rapid return since the beginning of this century, and with more soundness of judgment than Germany, towards the doctrines of the Cartesian school. Yet the opposite philosophy to that which never rises above sensible images is exposed to a danger of its own; it is one which the infirmity of the human faculties renders perpetually at hand: few there are, who, in reasoning on subjects where we cannot attain what Locke has called "positive comprehensive ideas," are secure from falling into mere nonsense and repugnancy. In that part of physics which is simply conversant with quantity, this danger is probably not great; but, in all such inquiries as are sometimes called transcendental, it has perpetually shipwrecked the adventurous navigator.

114. In the language and probably the notions of Locke as to the nature of the soul, there is an indistinctness more worthy of the Aristotelian schoolmen than of one conversant with the Cartesian philosophy.

His notions  
as to the  
soul,

"Bodies," he says, "manifestly produce ideas in us by impulse; the only way which we can conceive bodies to operate in. If, then, external objects be not united to our minds, when they produce ideas in it, and yet we perceive these original qualities in such of them as singly fall under our senses, it is evident that some motion must be thence continued by our nerves, or animal spirits, by some parts of our bodies to the brain, or the seat of sensation, there to produce in our minds the particular ideas we have of them. And since the extension, figure, number, and motion of bodies of an observable bigness may be perceived at a distance by the sight, it is evident some singly imperceptible bodies must come from them to the eyes, and thereby convey to the brain some motion which produces those ideas which we have of them in us." He so far retracts his first position afterwards as to admit, "in consequence of what Mr. Newton has shown in the Principia on the gravitation of matter towards matter," that God not only can put into bodies powers and ways of operation above what can be explained from what we know of matter, but that he has actually done so. And he promises to correct the former passage; which, however, he has never performed. In fact, he seems, by the use of phrases which recur too often to



be thought merely figurative, to have supposed that something in the brain comes into local contact with the mind. He was here unable to divest himself, any more than the schoolmen had done, of the notion that there is a proper action of the body on the soul in perception. The Cartesians had brought in the theory of occasional causes and other solutions of the phenomena, so as to avoid what seems so irreconcilable with an immaterial principle. No one is so lavish of a cerebral instrumentality in mental images as Malebranche; he seems at every moment on the verge of materialism; he coquets, as it were, with an Epicurean physiology: but, if I may be allowed to continue the metaphor, he perceives the moment where to stop, and retires, like a dexterous fair one, with unsmirched honor to his immateriality. It cannot be said that Locke is equally successful.

115. In another and a well-known passage, he has thrown out a doubt whether God might not superadd the And its Im- faculty of thinking to matter; and, though he thinks mortality. it probable that this has not been the case, leaves it at last a debatable question, wherein nothing else than presumptions are to be had. Yet he has strongly argued against the possibility of a material Deity upon reasons derived from the nature of matter. Locke almost appears to have taken the union of a thinking being with matter for the thinking of matter itself. What is there, Stillingfleet well asks, like self-consciousness in matter? "Nothing at all," Locke replies, "in matter as matter. But that God cannot bestow on some parcels of matter a power of thinking, and with it self-consciousness, will never be proved by asking how it is possible to apprehend that mere body should perceive that it doth perceive." But if that we call mind, and of which we are self-conscious, were thus superadded to matter, would it the less be something real? In what sense can it be compared to an accident or quality? It has been justly observed, that we are much more certain of the independent existence of mind than of that of matter. But that, by the constitution of our nature, a definite organization, or, what will be generally thought the preferable hypothesis, an organic molecule, should be a necessary concomitant of this immaterial principle, does not involve any absurdity at all, whatever want of evidence may be objected to it.

116. It is remarkable, that, in the controversy with Stilling-

fleet on this passage, Locke seems to take for granted, that there is no immaterial principle in brutes; and, as he had too much plain sense to adopt the Cartesian theory of their insensibility, he draws the most plausible argument for the possibility of thought in matter by the admitted fact of sensation and voluntary motion in these animal organizations. "It is not doubted but that the properties of a rose, a peach, or an elephant, superadded to matter, change not the properties of matter; but matter is, in these things, matter still." Few perhaps at present who believe in the immateriality of the human soul would deny the same to an elephant; but it must be owned that the discoveries of zoölogy have pushed this to consequences which some might not readily adopt. The spiritual being of a sponge revolts a little our prejudices; yet there is no resting-place, and we must admit this, or be content to sink ourselves into a mass of medullary fibre. Brutes have been as slowly emancipated in philosophy as some classes of mankind have been in civil polity: their souls, we see, were almost universally disputed to them at the end of the seventeenth century, even by those who did not absolutely bring them down to machinery. Even within the recollection of many, it was common to deny them any kind of reasoning faculty, and to solve their most sagacious actions by the vague word "instinct." We have come of late years to think better of our humble companions; and, as usual in similar cases, the predominant bias, at least with foreign naturalists, seems rather too much of a levelling character.

117. No quality more remarkably distinguishes Locke than his love of truth. He is of no sect or party; has no oblique design, such as we so frequently perceive, of sustaining some tenet which he suppresses; no submissiveness to the opinions of others, nor, what very few lay aside, to his own. Without having adopted certain dominant ideas, like Descartes and Malebranche, he follows, with inflexible impartiality and unwearied patience, the long process of analysis to which he has subjected the human mind. No great writer has been more exempt from vanity, in which he is very advantageously contrasted with Bacon and Descartes; but he is sometimes a little sharp, and contemptuous of his predecessors. The originality of Locke is real and unaffected: not that he has derived nothing from others, which would be a great reproach to himself or to them; but, in what

His love of truth, and originality.

has in common with other philosophers, there is always a tinge of his own thoughts, a modification of the particular tenet, or at least a peculiarity of language which renders it not very easy of detection. "It was not to be expected," says Stewart, "that in a work so composed by snatches, to borrow a phrase of the author, he should be able accurately to draw the line between his own ideas and the hints for which he was indebted to others. To those who are well acquainted with his speculations, it must appear evident that he had studied diligently the metaphysical writings both of Hobbes and Gassendi, and that he was no stranger to the Essays of Montaigne, to the philosophical works of Bacon, and to Malebranche's Inquiry after Truth. That he was familiarly conversant with the Cartesian system may be presumed from what we are told by his biographer, that it was this which first inspired him with a disgust at the jargon of the schools, and led him into that train of thinking which he afterwards prosecuted so successfully. I do not, however, recollect that he has anywhere in his Essay mentioned the name of any one of those authors. It is probable, that, when he sat down to write, he found the result of his youthful reading so completely identified with the fruits of his subsequent reflections, that it was impossible for him to attempt a separation of the one from the other, and that he was thus occasionally led to mistake the treasures of memory for those of invention. That this was really the case, may be further presumed from the peculiar and original cast of his phraseology, which, though in general careless and unpolished, has always the merit of that characteristical unity and raciness of style which demonstrate, that, while he was writing, he conceived himself to be drawing only from his own resources."<sup>1</sup>

118. The writer, however, whom we have just quoted, has not quite done justice to the originality of Locke in two cases. more than one instance. Thus on this very passage we find a note in these words: "Mr. Addison has remarked, that Malebranche had the start of Locke by several years in his notions on the subject of duration. Some other coincidences not less remarkable might be easily pointed out in the opinions of the English and of the French philosopher." I am not prepared to dispute, nor do I doubt, the truth of the latter sentence; but, with respect to the notions of Male-

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary Dissertation.

branche and Locke on duration, it must be said, that they are neither the same, nor has Addison asserted them to be so.<sup>1</sup> The one threw out an hypothesis with no attempt at proof: the other offered an explanation of the phenomena. What Locke has advanced as to our getting the idea of duration by reflecting on the succession of our ideas seems to be truly his own. Whether it be entirely the right explanation, is another question. It rather appears to me, that the internal sense, as we may not improperly call it, of duration, belongs separately to each idea, and is rather lost than suggested by their succession. Duration is best perceived when we are able to detain an idea for some time without change, as in watching the motion of a pendulum; and, though it is impossible for the mind to continue in this state of immobility more perhaps than about a second or two, this is sufficient to give us an idea of duration as the necessary condition of existence. Whether this be an objective or merely a subjective necessity, is an abstruse question, which our sensations do not enable us to decide. But Locke appears to have looked rather at the measure of duration, by which we divide it into portions, than at the mere simplicity of the idea itself. Such a measure, it is certain, can only be obtained through the medium of a succession in our ideas.

119. It has been also remarked by Stewart, that Locke claims a discovery due rather to Descartes; namely, the impossibility of defining simple ideas. Descartes, however, as well as the authors of the Port-Royal Logic, merely says, that words already as clear as we can make them do not require or even admit of definition. But I do not perceive that he has made the distinction we find in the Essay on the Human Understanding, that the names of simple ideas are not capable of any definition, while the names of all complex ideas are so. "It has not, that I know," Locke says, "been observed by anybody what words are, and what words are not, capable of being defined." The passage which I have quoted in another place from Descartes' posthumous dialogue, even if it went to this length, was unknown to Locke; yet he might have acknowledged that he had been in some measure anticipated in other observations by that philosopher.

120. The first book of the Essay on the Human Understanding is directed, as is well known, against the doctrine

<sup>1</sup> Spectator, No. 94.



of innate ideas, or innate principles in the mind. This has been often censured, as combating in some places a tenet which no one would support, and as, in other passages, breaking in upon moral distinctions themselves, by disputing the universality of their acknowledgment. With respect to the former charge, it is not perhaps easy for us to determine what might be the crude and confused notions, or at least language, of many who held the theory of innate ideas. It is by no means evident, that Locke had Descartes chiefly or even at all in his view. Lord Herbert, whom he distinctly answers, and many others, especially the Platonists, had dwelt upon innate ideas in far stronger terms than the great French metaphysician, if indeed he can be said to have maintained them at all. The latter and more important accusation rests upon no other pretext than that Locke must be reckoned among those who have not admitted a moral faculty of discerning right from wrong to be a part of our constitution. But that there is a law of nature imposed by the Supreme Being, and consequently universal, has been so repeatedly asserted in his writings, that it would imply great inattention to question it. Stewart has justly vindicated Locke in this respect from some hasty and indefinite charges of Beattie;<sup>1</sup> but I must venture to think that he goes much too far when he attempts to identify the doctrines of the Essay with those of Shaftesbury. These two philosophers were in opposite schools as to the test of moral sentiments. Locke seems always to adopt what is called the selfish system in morals, resolving all morality into religion, and all religion into a regard to our own interest; and he seems to have paid less attention to the emotions than to the intellectual powers of the soul.

121. It would by no means be difficult to controvert other tenets of this great man. But the obligations we owe to him for the Essay on the Human Understanding are never to be forgotten. It is truly the first real chart of the coasts, wherein some may be laid down incorrectly, but the general relations of all are perceived. And we, who find some things to censure in Locke, have perhaps learned how to censure them from himself; we have thrown

<sup>1</sup> [To the passages quoted by Stewart (*First Dissertation*, p. 29) we may add a letter, since published, of Locke to Mr. Tyrrell, wherein he most explicitly declares his belief, "that there is a law of nature knowable by the light of nature." — *King's Life of Locke*, vol. I. p. 306. — 1847.]

His view  
of innate  
ideas.

General  
praise.

off so many false notions and films of prejudice by his help, that we are become capable of judging our master. This is what has been the fate of all who have pushed onward the landmarks of science: they have made that easy for inferior men which was painfully labored through by themselves. Among many excellent things in the *Essay on Human Understanding*, none are more admirable than much of the third book on the nature of words, especially the three chapters on their imperfection and abuse.<sup>1</sup> In earlier treatises of logic, at least in that of Port-Royal, some of this might be found; but nowhere are verbal fallacies, and, above all, the sources from which they spring, so fully and conclusively exposed.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [In former editions I had said "the whole third book," which Mr. Mill calls "that immortal third book." But we must except the sixth chapter on the names of substances, in which Locke's reasoning against the real distinction of species in the three kingdoms of nature is full of false assumptions, and cannot be maintained at all in the present state of natural history. He asks, ch. vi. § 13, "What are the alterations may or may not be in a horse or lead, without making either of them to be of another species?" The answer is obvious, that an animal engendered between a horse and mare is a horse, and no other; and that any alteration in the atomic weight of lead would make it a different species. "I once saw a creature," says Locke, "that was the issue of a cat and a rat, and had the plain marks of both about it." This cannot be true; but, if it were, are there, therefore, no mere cats and mere rats? — 1847.]

<sup>2</sup> [A highly distinguished philosopher, M. Cousin, has devoted nearly a volume to the refutation of Locke, discussing almost every chapter in the second and fourth books of the *Essay on Human Understanding*. In many of these treatises, I cannot by any means go along with the able writer; and regret that he has taken so little pains to distinguish real from verbal differences of opinion, but has, on the contrary, had nothing so much at heart as to deprecate the glory of one whom Europe has long reckoned among the founders of metaphysical science. It may have been wrong in Locke to employ the word *idea* in different senses. But, as undoubtedly he did not always mean by it an image in the mind, what can be less fair than such passages as the following? — "Eh bien! songez-y, vous n'avez de connaissance légitime de la pensée, de la volonté, de la sensibilité, qu'à la condition que les idées que vous en avez vous

les représentent; et ces idées doivent être des images, et par conséquent des images matérielles. Jugez dans quelle abîme d'absurdités nous voilà tombés. Pour connaître la pensée et la volonté qui sont immatérielles, il faut que nous en ayons une image matérielle qui leur ressemble." — *Cours de l'Hist. de la Phil.*, vol. II, p. 348, ed. 1829. It ought surely to have occurred, that in proportion to the absurdity of such a proposition was the want of likelihood that a mind eminently cautious and reflective should have embraced it.

It is not possible in a note to remark on the many passages wherein M. Cousin has done no fair measure to our illustrious metaphysician. But one I will not pass over. He quotes Locke for the words: "A l'égard des esprits (nos âmes, les intelligences) [interpolation by M. Cousin himself], nous ne pouvons pas plus connaître qu'il y a des esprits si ou réellement existans, par les idées que nous en avons, que nous ne pouvons connaître qu'il y a des fées ou des centaures par les idées que nous nous en formons." Voilà bien, ce me semble, le scepticisme absolu; et vous pensez peut-être que la conclusion dernière de Locke sera qu'il n'y a aucune connaissance des esprits finis, par conséquent de notre âme, par conséquent encore d'aucune des facultés de notre âme, car l'objection est aussi valable contre les phénomènes de l'âme que contre la substance. C'est là où il aurait dû aboutir; mais il ne l'ose, parce qu'il n'y a pas un philosophe à la fois plus sage et plus inconsistant que Locke. Que fait-il, Messieurs? Dans le peril où le pousse la philosophie, il abandonne sa philosophie et toute philosophie, et il en appelle au christianisme, à la révélation, à la foi; et par foi, par révélation, il n'entend pas une foi, une révélation philosophique; cette interprétation n'appartient pas au temps

Locke's  
Conduct of  
Under-  
standing.

122. The same praiseworthy diligence in hunting error to its lurking-places distinguishes the short treatise on the Conduct of the Understanding; which, having been originally designed as an additional chapter to the Essay,<sup>1</sup> is as it were the ethical application of its theory, and ought always to be read with it, if indeed, for the sake of its practical utility, it should not come sooner into the course of education. Aristotle himself, and the whole of his dialectical school, had pointed out many of the sophisms against which we should guard our reasoning faculties; but these are chiefly such as others attempt to put upon us in dispute. There are more dangerous fallacies by which we cheat ourselves, — prejudice, partiality, self-interest, vanity, inattention, and indifference to truth. Locke, who was as exempt from these as almost any man who has turned his mind to so many subjects where their influence is to be suspected, has dwelled on the moral discipline of the intellect in this treatise, better, as I conceive, than any of his predecessors; though we have already seen, and it might appear far more at length to those who should have recourse to the books, that Arnauld and Malebranche, besides other French philosophers of the age, had not been remiss in this indispensable part of logic.

de Locke; il entend la foi et la révélation dans le sens propre de la théologie la plus orthodoxe; et il conclut ainsi: 'Par conséquent, sur l'existence de l'esprit nous devons nous contenter de l'évidence de la foi.' — p. 350. Who could suppose that all this imputation of unlimited scepticism, not less than that of Hume, since it amounts to a doubt of the existence of our own minds, is founded on M. Cousin's misunderstanding of the word *spirit*? By spirits, or finite spirits, Locke did not mean our own minds, but created intelligences, differing from human, as the word was constantly used in theological metaphysics. The sense of the passage to which M. Cousin refers is so clear, that no English reader could misconceive it: probably he was led wrong by a translation in which he found the word *esprit*.

But I really cannot imagine any translation to be so unfaithful as to remove from M. Cousin the blame of extreme carelessness. The words of Locke are "Concerning finite spirits, as well as several other things, we must content ourselves with the evidence of faith." — B. iv. ch. 11. But, at the beginning of the same chapter, he says, "The knowledge of our own being we have by intuition." And in

the preceding, the tenth chapter, more fully: "I think it is beyond question that man has a clear perception of his own being: he knows certainly that he exists, and that he is something. He that can doubt whether he be any thing or no, I speak not to, no more than I would argue with pure nothing, or endeavor to convince nonentity that it were something." Compare this with M. Cousin's representation.

The name of Locke is part of our literary inheritance, which, as Englishmen, we cannot sacrifice. If, indeed, the universality at which he was educated cannot discover that he is, perhaps, her chief boast, if a disclaimer from that quarter presumes to speak of "the sophist Locke," we may console ourselves by reflecting how little influence such a local party is likely to obtain over the literary world. But the fame of M. Cousin is so conspicuous, that his prejudices readily become the prejudices of many, and his misrepresentations pass with many for unanswerable criticisms. — 1847.]

<sup>1</sup> See a letter to Molyneux, dated April, 1697: Locke's Works (ed. 1769), vol. iii. p. 539.

123. Locke throughout this treatise labors to secure the inquirer from that previous persuasion of his own opinion, which generally renders all his pretended investigations of its truth little more than illusive and nugatory. But the indifference which he recommends to every thing except truth itself, so that we should not even wish any thing to be true before we have examined whether it be so, seems to involve the impossible hypothesis, that man is but a purely reasoning being. It is vain to press the recommendation of freedom from prejudice so far; since we cannot but conceive some propositions to be more connected with our welfare than others, and consequently to desire their truth. These exaggerations lay a fundamental condition of honest inquiry open to the sneers of its adversaries; and it is sufficient, because nothing more is really attainable, first to dispossess ourselves of the notion that our interests are concerned where they are not; and next, even when we cannot but wish one result of our inquiries rather than another, to be the more unremitting in our endeavors to exclude this bias from our reasoning.

124. I cannot think any parent or instructor justified in neglecting to put this little treatise in the hands of a boy about the time when the reasoning faculties become developed. It will give him a sober and serious, not flippant or self-conceited, independency of thinking; and while it teaches how to distrust ourselves, and to watch those prejudices which necessarily grow up from one cause or another, will inspire a reasonable confidence in what he has well considered, by taking off a little of that deference to authority, which is the more to be regretted in its excess, that like its cousin-german, party-spirit, it is frequently united to loyalty of heart and the generous enthusiasm of youth.



## CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY OF MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND OF  
JURISPRUDENCE, FROM 1650 TO 1700.

## SECT. I. — ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

Pascal's Provincial Letters — Taylor — Cudworth — Spinoza — Cumberland's Law of Nature — Puffendorf's Treatise on the same Subject — Rochefoucault and La Bruyère — Locke on Education — Fénelon.

1. THE casuistical writers of the Roman Church, and especially of the Jesuit order, belong to earlier periods; for little room was left for any thing but popular compilations from large works of vast labor and accredited authority. But the false principles imputed to the latter school now raised a louder cry than before. Implacable and unsparing enemies, as well as ambitious intriguers themselves, they were encountered by a host of those who envied, feared, and hated them. Among those, none were such willing or able accusers as the Jansenists whom they persecuted. Pascal, by his Provincial Letters, did more to ruin the name of Jesuit than all the controversies of Protestantism, or all the fulminations of the Parliament of Paris. A letter of Antony Arnauld, published in 1655, wherein he declared that he could not find in Jansenius the propositions condemned by the pope, and laid himself open to censure by some of his own, provoked the Sorbonne, of which he was a member, to exclude him from the faculty of theology. Before this resolution was taken, Pascal came forward in defence of his friend, under a fictitious name, in the first of what have been always called *Lettres Provinciales*, but more accurately, *Lettres écrites par Louis de Montalte à un Provincial de ses Amis*. In the first four of them, he discusses the thorny problems of Jansenism, aiming

Casuistry  
of the Je-  
suits.

Pascal's  
Provincial  
Letters.

chiefly to show that St. Thomas Aquinas had maintained the same doctrine on efficacious grace which his disciples the Dominicans now rejected from another quarter. But he passed from hence to a theme more generally intelligible and interesting, the false morality of the Jesuit casuists. He has accumulated so long a list of scandalous decisions, and dwelled upon them with so much wit and spirit, and yet with so serious a severity, that the order of Loyola became a by-word with mankind. I do not agree with those who think the Provincial Letters a greater proof of the genius of Pascal than his Thoughts, in spite of the many weaknesses in reasoning which these display. The former are at present, finely written as all confess them to be, too much filled with obsolete controversy, they quote books too much forgotten, they have too little bearing on any permanent sympathies, to be read with much interest or pleasure.

2. The Jesuits had, unfortunately for themselves, no writers, at that time, of sufficient ability to defend them; and, being disliked by many who were not Jansenists, <sup>Their truth questioned by some.</sup> could make little stand against their adversaries, till public opinion had already taken its line. They have since not failed to charge Pascal with extreme misrepresentation of their eminent casuists, Escobar, Busenbaum, and many others; so that some later disciples of their school have ventured to call the Provincial Letters the immortal liars (*les immortelles menteuses*). It has been insinuated, since Pascal's veracity is hard to attack, that he was deceived by those from whom he borrowed his quotations. But he has himself declared, in a remarkable passage, not only that, far from repenting of these letters, he would make them yet stronger if it were to be done again, but that, although he had not read all the books he has quoted, else he must have spent great part of his life in reading bad books, yet he had read Escobar twice through; and, with respect to the rest, he had not quoted a single passage without having seen it in the book, and examined the context before and after, that he might not confound an objection with an answer, which would have been reprehensible and unjust:<sup>1</sup> it is therefore impossible to save the honor of Pascal, if his quotations are not fair. Nor did he stand alone in his imputations on the Jesuit casuistry. A book called *Morale des Jésuites*, by Nicolas Perault,

<sup>1</sup> (*Œuvres de Pascal*, vol. i. p. 400)

published at Mons in 1667, goes over the same ground with less pleasantry, but not less learning.

3. The most extensive and learned work on casuistry which has appeared in the English language is the *Ductor Dubitantium* of Jeremy Taylor, published in 1660. This, as its title shows, treats of subjective morality, or the guidance of the conscience. But this cannot be much discussed without establishing some principles of objective right and wrong, some standard by which the conscience is to be ruled. "The whole measure and rule of conscience," according to Taylor, "is the law of God, or God's will signified to us by nature or revelation; and, by the several manners and times and parts of its communication, it hath obtained several names,—the law of nature; the consent of nations; right reason; the Decalogue; the sermon of Christ; the canons of the apostles; the laws, ecclesiastical and civil, of princes and governors; fame, or the public reputation of things, expressed by proverbs and other instances and manners of public honesty. . . . These, being the full measures of right and wrong, of lawful and unlawful, will be the rule of conscience and the subject of the present book."

Its character and defects.

4. The heterogeneous combination of things so different in nature and authority, as if they were all expressions of the law of God, does not augur well for the distinctness of Taylor's moral philosophy, and would be disadvantageously compared with the Ecclesiastical Polity of Hooker. Nor are we deceived in the anticipations we might draw. With many of Taylor's excellences, his vast fertility and his frequent acuteness, the *Ductor Dubitantium* exhibits his characteristic defects: the waste of quotations is even greater than in his other writings, and his own exuberance of mind degenerates into an intolerable prolixity. His solution of moral difficulties is often unsatisfactory: after an accumulation of arguments and authorities, we have the disappointment to perceive that the knot is neither untied nor cut; there seems a want of close investigation of principles, a frequent confusion and obscurity, which Taylor's two chief faults—excessive display of erudition, and redundancy of language—conspire to produce. Paley is no doubt often superficial, and sometimes mistaken; yet in clearness, in conciseness, in freedom from impertinent reference to authority, he is far superior to Taylor.

5. Taylor seems too much inclined to side with those who resolve all right and wrong into the positive will of God. The law of nature he defines to be "the universal law of the world, or of mankind, to which we are inclined by nature, invited by consent, prompted by reason, but which is bound upon us only by the command of God." Though, in the strict meaning of the word *law*, this may be truly said, it was surely required, considering the large sense which that word has obtained as coincident with moral right, that a fuller explanation should be given than Taylor has even intimated, lest the goodness of the Deity should seem something arbitrary and precarious. And though, in maintaining, against most of the scholastic metaphysicians, that God can dispense with the precepts of the Decalogue, he may be substantially right, yet his reasons seem by no means the clearest and most satisfactory that might be assigned. It may be added, that, in his prolix rules concerning what he calls a probable conscience, he comes very near to the much-decried theories of the Jesuits. There was indeed a vein of subtilty in Taylor's understanding which was not always without influence on his candor.

6. A treatise concerning eternal and immutable morality, by Cudworth, was first published in 1731. This may be almost reckoned a portion of his Intellectual System, the object being what he has declared to be one of those which he had there in view. This was to prove that moral differences of right and wrong are antecedent to any divine law. He wrote, therefore, not only against the Calvinistic school, but in some measure against Taylor; though he abstains from mentioning any recent author except Descartes, who had gone far in referring all moral distinctions to the arbitrary will of God. Cudworth's reasoning is by no means satisfactory, and rests too much on the dogmatic metaphysics which were going out of use. The nature or essence of nothing, he maintains, can depend upon the will of God alone, which is the efficient, but not the formal, cause of all things; a distinction not very intelligible, but on which he seems to build his theory.<sup>1</sup> For, though admitting that moral relations have no objective existence out of the mind, he holds that they have a positive essence, and therefore are not nothing: whence it follows that they must be independent

Cudworth's  
immutable  
morality.



of will. He pours out much ancient learning, though not so lavishly as in the Intellectual System.

7. The urgent necessity of contracting my sails in this last period, far the most abundant as it is in the variety and extent of its literature, restrains me from more than a bare mention of several works not undeserving of regard. The *Essais de Morale* of Nicole are less read than esteemed, says a late biographer.<sup>1</sup> Voltaire, however, prophesied that they would not perish. "The chapter, especially," he proceeds, "on the means of preserving peace among men, is a master-piece, to which nothing equal has been left to us by antiquity."<sup>2</sup> These Essays are properly contained in six volumes; but so many other pieces are added in some editions, that the collection under that title is very long. La Placette, minister of a French church at Copenhagen, has been called the Protestant Nicole. His *Essais de Morale*, in 1692 and other years, are full of a solid morality, rather strict in casuistry, and apparently not deficient in observation and analytical views of human nature. They were much esteemed in their own age. Works of this kind treat so very closely on the department of practical religion, that it is sometimes difficult to separate them on any fixed principle. A less homiletical form, a comparative absence of scriptural quotation, a more reasoning and observing mode of dealing with the subject, are the chief distinctions. But, in the sermons of Barrow and some others, we find a great deal of what may be justly called moral philosophy.

8. A book by Sharrock, *De Officiis secundum Rationis* Other writers. *Humane Dictata*, 1660, is occasionally quoted, and seems to be of a philosophical nature.<sup>3</sup> Velthuysen, a Dutch minister, was of more reputation. His name was rather obnoxious to the orthodox; since he was a strenuous advocate of toleration, a Cartesian in philosophy, and inclined to judge for himself. His chief works are *De Principiis Justitiae Decori* and *De Naturali Pudore*.<sup>4</sup> But we must now pass on to those who have exercised a greater influence in moral philosophy. — Cumberland and Puffendorf, — after giving a short consideration to Spinoza.

9. The moral system, if so it may be called, of Spinoza

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Univ.

<sup>2</sup> *Siècle de Louis XIV.*

<sup>3</sup> Cumberland (in *praefatione*) *De Legibus Naturae*.

<sup>4</sup> Biogr. Univ.; Barbeyrac's notes on Puffendorf, *passim*.

has been developed by him in the fourth and fifth parts of his Ethics. We are not deceived in what might naturally be expected from the unhesitating adherence of Spinoza to a rigorous line of reasoning, that his ethical scheme would offer nothing inconsistent with the fundamental pantheism of his philosophy. In nature itself, he maintains as before, there is neither perfection nor imperfection, neither good nor evil; but these are modes of speaking, adopted to express the relations of things as they appear to our minds. Whatever contains more positive attributes capable of being apprehended by us than another contains, is more perfect than it. Whatever we know to be useful to ourselves, that is good; and whatever impedes our attainment of good is evil. By this utility, Spinoza does not understand happiness, if by that is meant pleasurable sensation, but the extension of our mental and bodily capacities. The passions restrain and overpower these capacities; and coming from without, that is, from the body, render the mind a less powerful agent than it seems to be. It is only, we may remember, in a popular sense, and subject to his own definitions, that Spinoza acknowledges the mind to be an agent at all: it is merely so in so far as its causes of action cannot be referred by us to any thing external. No passion can be restrained except by a stronger passion. Hence even a knowledge of what is really good or evil for us can of itself restrain no passion, but only as it is associated with a perception of joy and sorrow, which is a mode of passion. This perception is necessarily accompanied by desire or aversion; but they may often be so weak as to be controlled by other sentiments of the same class inspired by conflicting passions. This is the cause of the weakness and inconstancy of many; and he alone is wise and virtuous who steadily pursues what is useful to himself; that is, what reason points out as the best means of preserving his well-being and extending his capacities. Nothing is absolutely good, nothing therefore is principally sought by a virtuous man, but knowledge, not of things external, which gives us only inadequate ideas, but of God. Other things are good or evil to us so far as they suit our nature or contradict it; and, so far as men act by reason, they must agree in seeking what is conformable to their nature. And those who act with us in living by reason are themselves of a nature suitable to our nature; so that the society of such persons

most to be desired; and to enlarge that society by rendering men virtuous, and by promoting their advantage when they are so, is most useful to ourselves. For the good of such as pursue virtue may be enjoyed by all, and does not obstruct our own. Whatever conduces to the common society of mankind, and promotes concord among them, is useful to all; and whatever has an opposite tendency is pernicious. The passions are sometimes incapable of excess; but of this the only instances are joy and cheerfulness: more frequently they become pernicious by being indulged, and in some cases, such as hatred, can never be useful. We should therefore, for our own sakes, meet the hatred and malevolence of others with love and liberality. Spinoza dwells much on the preference due to a social above a solitary life, to cheerfulness above austerity; and alludes frequently to the current theological ethics with censure.

10. The fourth part of the Ethics is entitled On Human Slavery, meaning the subjugation of the reason to the passions: the fifth, On Human Liberty, is designed to show, as had been partly done in the former, how the mind or intellectual man is to preserve its supremacy. This is to be effected, not by the extinction, which is impossible, but the moderation, of the passions; and the secret of doing this, according to Spinoza, is to contemplate such things as are naturally associated with affections of no great violence. We find, that when we look at things simply in themselves, and not in their necessary relations, they affect us more powerfully: whence it may be inferred that we shall weaken the passion by viewing them as parts of a necessary series. We promote the same end by considering the object of the passion in many different relations, and in general by enlarging the sphere of our knowledge concerning it. Hence, the more adequate ideas we attain of things that affect us, the less we shall be overcome by the passion they excite. But, most of all, it should be our endeavor to refer all things to the idea of God. The more we understand ourselves and our passions, the more we shall love God; for, the more we understand any thing, the more pleasure we have in contemplating it; and we shall associate the idea of God with this pleasurable contemplation, which is the essence of love. The love of God should be the chief employment of the mind. But God has no passions: therefore he who desires that God should love him, desires in

fact that he should cease to be God. And the more we believe others to be united in the same love of God, the more we shall love him ourselves.

11. The great aim of the mind, and the greatest degree of virtue, is the knowledge of things in their essence. This knowledge is the perfection of human nature; it is accompanied with the greatest joy and contentment; it leads to a love of God, intellectual, not imaginative, eternal, because not springing from passions that perish with the body, being itself a portion of that infinite love with which God intellectually loves himself. In this love towards God our chief felicity consists, which is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself: nor is any one happy because he has overcome the passions; but it is by being happy, that is, by enjoying the fulness of divine love, that he has become capable of overcoming them.

12. These extraordinary effusions confirm what has been hinted in another place, that Spinoza, in the midst of his atheism, seemed often to hover over the regions of mystical theology. This last book of the *Ethics* speaks, as is evident, the very language of Quietism. In Spinoza himself it is not easy to understand the meaning: his sincerity ought not, I think, to be called in question; and this enthusiasm may be set down to the rapture of the imagination expatiating in the enchanting wilderness of its creation. But the possibility of combining such a tone of contemplative devotion with the systematic denial of a Supreme Being, in any personal sense, may put us on our guard against the tendency of mysticism, which may again, as it has frequently, degenerate into a similar chaos.

13. The science of ethics, in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, seemed to be cultivated by three very divergent schools, — by that of the theologians, who went no farther than revelation, or at least than the positive law of God, for moral distinctions; by that of the Platonic philosophers, who sought them in eternal and intrinsic relations; and that of Hobbes and Spinoza, who reduced them all to selfish prudence. A fourth theory, which, in some of its modifications, has greatly prevailed in the last two centuries, may be referred to Richard Cumberland, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough. His famous work, *De Legibus Naturæ Disquisitio Philosophica*, was published in 1672. It is contained in nine chapters, besides the preface or prolegomena.

Cumber-  
land's  
*De Legibus  
Naturæ.*



14. Cumberland begins by mentioning Grotius, Selden, and one or two more who have investigated the laws of nature *à posteriori*; that is, by the testimony of authors and the consent of nations. But as some objections may be started against this mode of proof, which, though he does not hold them to be valid, are likely to have some effect, he prefers another line of demonstration, deducing the laws of nature, as effects, from their real causes in the constitution of nature itself. The Platonic theory of innate moral ideas, sufficient to establish natural law, he does not admit. "For myself at least I may say, that I have not been so fortunate as to arrive at the knowledge of this law by so compendious a road." He deems it, therefore, necessary to begin with what we learn by daily use and experience; assuming nothing but the physical laws of motion shown by mathematicians, and the derivation of all their operations from the will of a First Cause.

15. By diligent observation of all propositions which can be justly reckoned general moral laws of nature, he finds that they may be reduced to one, the pursuit of the common good of all rational agents, which tends to our own good as part of the whole; as its opposite tends not only to the misery of the whole system, but to our own.<sup>1</sup> This tendency, he takes care to tell us, though he uses the present tense (*conducit*), has respect to the most remote consequences, and is so understood by him. The means which serve to this end, the general good, may be treated as theorems in a geometrical method.<sup>2</sup> Cumberland, as we have seen in Spinoza, was captivated by the apparent security of this road to truth.

16. This scheme, he observes, may at first sight want the two requisites of a law, a legislator and a sanction. But whatever is naturally assented to by our minds must spring from the author of nature. God is proved to be the author of every proposition which is proved to be true by the constitution of nature, which has him for its author.<sup>3</sup> Nor is a sanction wanting in the rewards, that is, the happiness which attends the observance of the law of nature, and in the opposite effects of its neglect; and in a lax sense, though not that of the jurists, reward as well as punishment may be included in the word "sanction."<sup>4</sup> But benevolence, that is, love and de-

<sup>1</sup> Prolegomena, sect. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Sect. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Sect. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Sect. 14.

sire of good towards all rational beings, includes piety towards God, the greatest of them all, as well as humanity.<sup>1</sup> Cumberland altogether abstains from arguments founded on revelation, and is perhaps the first writer on natural law who has done so; for they may even be found in Hobbes. And I think that he may be reckoned the founder of what is awkwardly and invidiously called the utilitarian school; for, though similar expressions about the common good may sometimes be found in the ancients, it does not seem to have been the basis of any ethical system.

17. This common good, not any minute particle of it, as the benefit of a single man, is the great end of the legislator and of him who obeys his will. And such human actions as by their natural tendency promote the common good may be called naturally good, more than those which tend only to the good of any one man, by how much the whole is greater than this small part. And whatever is directed in the shortest way to this end may be called right, as a right line is the shortest of all. And as the whole system of the universe, when all things are arranged so as to produce happiness, is beautiful, being aptly disposed to its end, which is the definition of beauty; so particular actions contributing to this general harmony may be called beautiful and becoming.<sup>2</sup>

18. Cumberland acutely remarks, in answer to the objection to the practice of virtue from the evils which fall on good men, and the success of the wicked, that no good or evil is to be considered, in this point of view, which arises from mere necessity, or external causes, and not from our virtue or vice itself. He then shows, that a regard for piety and peace, for mutual intercourse, and civil and domestic polity, tends to the happiness of every one; and, in reckoning the good consequences of virtuous behavior, we are not only to estimate the pleasure intimately connected with it, which the love of God and of good men produces, but the contingent benefits we obtain by civil society, which we promote by such conduct.<sup>3</sup> And we see that in all nations there is some regard to good faith and the distribution of property, some respect to the obligation of oaths, some attachments to relations and friends. All men, therefore, acknowledge, and to a certain extent perform, those things which really tend to the common good. And though crime and violence sometimes prevail, yet

<sup>1</sup> Prolegomena, sect. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Sect. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Sect. 21.

these are like diseases in the body, which it shakes off: or if, like them, they prove sometimes mortal to a single community, yet human society is immortal, and the conservative principles of common good have in the end far more efficacy than those which dissolve and destroy states.

19. We may reckon the happiness consequent on virtue as a true sanction of natural law annexed to it by its author, and thus fulfilling the necessary conditions of its definition. And though some have laid less stress on these sanctions, and deemed virtue its own reward, and gratitude to God and man its best motive, yet the consent of nations and common experience show us, that the observance of the first end, which is the common good, will not be maintained without remuneration or the penal consequences.

20. By this single principle of common good, we simplify the method of natural law, and arrange its secondary precepts in such subordination as best conduces to the general end. Hence moral rules give way in particular cases, when they come in collision with others of more extensive importance. For all ideas of right or virtue imply a relation to the system and nature of all rational beings. And the principles thus deduced as to moral conduct are generally applicable to political societies, which, in their two leading institutions, — the division of property and the coercive power of the magistrate, — follow the steps of natural law, and adopt these rules of polity, because they perceive them to promote the common weal.

21. From all intermixture of scriptural authority, Cumberland proposes to abstain, building only on reason and experience; since we believe the Scriptures to proceed from God, because they illustrate and promote the law of nature. He seems to have been the first Christian writer who sought to establish systematically the principles of moral right independently of revelation. They are, indeed, taken for granted by many, especially those who adopted the Platonic language; or the schoolmen may have demonstrated them by arguments derived from reason, but seldom, if ever, without some collateral reference to theological authority. In this respect, therefore, Cumberland may be deemed to make an epoch in the history of ethical philosophy; though Puffendorf, whose work was published the same year, may have nearly equal claims to it. If we compare the *Treatise on the Laws of Nature*

with the *Ductor Dubitantium* of Taylor, written a very few years before, we shall find ourselves in a new world of moral reasoning. The schoolmen and fathers, the canonists and casuists, have vanished like ghosts at the first daylight: the continual appeal is to experience, and never to authority; or, if authority can be said to appear at all in the pages of Cumberland, it is that of the great apostles of experimental philosophy,—Descartes or Huygens, or Harvey or Willis. His mind, liberal and comprehensive as well as acute, had been forcibly impressed with the discoveries of his own age, both in mathematical science and in what is now more strictly called physiology. From this armory he chose his weapons, and employed them, in some instances, with great sagacity and depth of thought. From the brilliant success also of the modern analysis, as well as from the natural prejudice in favor of a mathematical method, which arises from the acknowledged superiority of that science in the determination of its proper truths, he was led to expect more from the use of similar processes in moral reasoning than we have found justified by experience. And this analogy had probably some effect on one of the chief errors of his ethical system,—the reduction, at least in theory, of the morality of actions to definite calculation.

22. The *prolegomena* or preface to Cumberland's treatise contains that statement of his system with which we have been hitherto concerned, and which the whole volume does but expand. His manner of reasoning is diffuse, abounding in repetitions, and often exursive: we cannot avoid perceiving that he labors long on propositions which no adversary would dispute, or on which the dispute could be little else than one of verbal definition. This, however, is almost the universal failing of preceding philosophers, and was only put an end to, if it can be said yet to have ceased, by the sharper logic of controversy which a more general regard to metaphysical inquiries, and a juster sense of the value of words, brought into use.

23. The question between Cumberland and his adversaries, that is, the school of Hobbes, is stated to be, whether certain propositions of immutable truth, directing the voluntary actions of men in choosing good and avoiding evil, and imposing an obligation upon them, independently of civil laws, are necessarily suggested to the mind by the nature of things and

His theory  
expanded  
afterwards.



by that of mankind. And the affirmative of this question he undertakes to prove from a consideration of the nature of both: from which many particular rules might be deduced, but above all that which comprehends all the rest, and is the basis of his theory; namely, that the greatest possible benevolence (not a mere languid desire, but an energetic principle) of every rational agent towards all the rest constitutes the happiest condition of each and of all, so far as depends on their own power, and is necessarily required for their greatest happiness; whence the common good is the supreme law. That God is the author of this law appears evident from his being the author of all nature and of all the physical laws according to which impressions are made on our minds.

24. It is easy to observe by daily experience, that we have the power of doing good to others, and that no men are so happy or so secure as they who most exert this. And this may be proved synthetically and in that more rigorous method which he affects, though it now and then leads the reader away from the simplest argument, by considering our own faculties of speech and language, the capacities of the hand and countenance, the skill we possess in sciences, and in useful arts; all of which conduce to the social life of mankind and to their mutual co-operation and benefit. Whatever preserves and perfects the nature of any thing,—that is to be called good; and the opposite, evil: so that Hobbes has crudely asserted good to respect only the agent desiring it, and consequently to be variable. In this it will be seen that the dispute is chiefly verbal.

25. Two corollaries of great importance in the theory of ethics spring from a consideration of our physical powers. The first is, that, inasmuch as they are limited by their nature, we should never seek to transgress their bounds, but distinguish, as the Stoics did, things within our reach, *τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῶν*, from those beyond it, *τὰ οὐκ ἐφ' ἡμῶν*, thus relieving our minds from anxious passions, and turning them to the prudent use of the means assigned to us. The other is one which applies more closely to his general principle of morals; that, as all we can do in respect of others, and all the enjoyment we or they can have of particular things, is limited to certain persons, as well as by space and time, we perceive the necessity of distribution, both as to things, from which spring the

rights of property, and as to persons, by which our benevolence, though a general rule in itself, is practically directed towards individuals. For the conservation of an aggregate whole is the same as that of its divided parts, that is, of single persons, which requires a distributive exercise of the powers of each. Hence property and dominion, or *meum* and *tuum*, in the most general sense, are consequences from the general law of nature. Without a support from that law, according to Cumberland, without a positive tendency to the good of all rational agents, we should have no right even to things necessary for our preservation; nor have we that right, if a greater evil would be incurred by our preservation than by our destruction. It may be added, as a more universal reflection, that, as all which we see in nature is so framed as to persevere in its appointed state, and as the human body is endowed with the power of throwing off whatever is noxious and threatens the integrity of its condition, we may judge from this that the conservation of mankind in its best state must be the design of nature, and that their own voluntary actions conducing to that end must be such as the Author of nature commands and approves.

26. Cumberland next endeavors, by an enlarged analysis of the mental and bodily structure of mankind, to evince their aptitude for the social virtues, that is, for the general benevolence which is the primary law of nature. We have the power of knowing these by our rational faculty, which is the judge of right and wrong, that is, of what is conformable to the great law; and by the other faculties of the mind, as well as by the use of language, we generalize and reduce to propositions the determinations of reason. We have also the power of comparison, and of perceiving analogies, by means of which we estimate degrees of good. And, if we are careful to guard against deciding without clear and adequate apprehensions of things, our reason will not mislead us. The observance of something like this general law of nature by inferior animals, which rarely, as Cumberland supposes, attack those of the same species, and in certain instances live together, as if by a compact for mutual aid; the peculiar contrivances in the human body which seem designed for the maintenance of society; the possession of speech, the pathognomic countenance, the efficiency of the hand, a longevity beyond the lower animals, the duration of the sexual appetite through-

out the year, with several other arguments derived from anatomy,—are urged throughout this chapter against the unsocial theory of Hobbes.

27. Natural good is defined by Cumberland with more latitude than has been used by Paley and by those of a later school, who confine it to happiness or pleasurable perception. Whatever conduces to the preservation of an intelligent being, or to the perfection of his powers, he accounts to be good, without regard to enjoyment. And for this he appeals to experience; since we desire existence, as well as the extension of our powers of action, for their own sakes. It is of great importance to acquire a clear notion of what is truly good, that is, of what serves most to the happiness and perfection of every one; since all the secondary laws of nature, that is, the rules of particular virtues, derive their authority from this effect. These rules may be compared one with another as to the probability as well as the value of their effects upon the general good; and he anticipates greater advantage from the employment of mathematical reasoning and even analytical forms in moral philosophy than the different nature of the subjects would justify, even if the fundamental principle of converting the theory of ethics into calculation could be allowed.<sup>1</sup>

28. A law of nature, meaning one subordinate to the great principle of benevolence, is defined by Cumberland to be a proposition manifested by the nature of things to the mind according to the will of the First Cause, and pointing out an action tending to the good of rational beings, from the performance of which an adequate reward, or from the neglect of which a punishment, will ensue by the nature of such rational beings. Every part of this definition he proves with exceeding prolixity in the longest chapter, namely, the fifth, of his treatise; but we have already seen the foundations of his theory upon which it rests. It will be evident to the reader of this chapter, that both Butler and Paley have been largely indebted to Cumberland.<sup>2</sup> Natural obligation he defines thus: No other necessity determines the will to act than

<sup>1</sup> "Ea quippe tota (disciplina morum) vocatur in excitandis rationibus virium humanarum ad commune bonum optum rationalium quicquam felicitum, quæ quidem variant in omni casuum possibilitatum varietate."—Cap. ii. sect. 9. The same is laid down in several other passages.

gos. By *rationalibus* we must understand *rationes*; which brings out the calculating theory in the strongest light.

<sup>2</sup> A great part of the second and third chapters of Butler's Analogy will be found in Cumberland. See cap. v. sect. 22.

that of avoiding evil and of seeking good, so far as appears to be in our power.<sup>1</sup> Moral obligation is more limited, and is differently defined.<sup>2</sup> But the main point, as he justly observes, of the controversy is the connection between the tendency of each man's actions, taking them collectively through his life, to the good of the whole, and that to his own greatest happiness and perfection. This he undertakes to show, premising that it is two-fold; consisting immediately in the pleasure attached to virtue, and ultimately in the rewards which it obtains from God and from man. God, as a rational being, cannot be supposed to act without an end, or to have a greater end than the general good; that is, the happiness and perfection of his creatures.<sup>3</sup> And his will may not only be shown *a priori*, by the consideration of his essence and attributes, but by the effects of virtue and vice in the order of nature which he has established. The rewards and punishments which follow at the hands of men are equally obvious; and whether we regard men as God's instruments, or as voluntary agents, demonstrate that virtue is the highest prudence. These arguments are urged rather tediously, and in such a manner as not to encounter all the difficulties which it is desirable to overcome.

29. Two objections might be alleged against this kind of proof: that the rewards and punishments of moral actions are too uncertain to be accounted clear proofs of the will of God, and consequently of their natural obligation; and that, by laying so much stress upon them, we make private happiness the measure of good. These he endeavors to repel. The contingency of a future consequence has a determinate value, which, if it more than compensates, for good or evil, the evil or good of a present action, ought to be deemed a proof given by the Author of nature, that reward or punishment are annexed to the action, as much as if they were its necessary consequences.<sup>4</sup> This argument, perhaps sophistical, is an instance of the calculating method affected by Cumberland, and which we may presume, from the then recent application of analysis to probability, he was the first to adopt on such an occasion. Paley is sometimes fond of a similar process. But, after these mathematical reasonings, he dwells, as before, on the bene-

<sup>1</sup> "Non alla necessitas voluntatem ad bonumque quatenus nobis apparet prosequendum determinat, quam malum in sequendi." — Cap. v. sect. 7.  
<sup>2</sup> Sect. 27. <sup>3</sup> Sect. 19. <sup>4</sup> Sect. 27.



ficial effects of virtue, and concludes that many of them are so uniform as to leave no doubt as to the intention of the Creator. Against the charge of postponing the public good to that of the agent, he protests that it is wholly contrary to his principle, which permits no one to preserve his life, or what is necessary for it, at the expense of a greater good to the whole.<sup>1</sup> But his explication of the question ends in repenting, that no single man's greatest felicity can by the nature of things be inconsistent with that of all; and that every such hypothesis is to be rejected as an impossible condition of the problem. It seems doubtful whether Cumberland uses always the same language on the question, whether private happiness is the final motive of action, which in this part of the chapter he wholly denies.

30. From the establishment of this primary law of universal benevolence, Cumberland next deduces the chief secondary principles, which are commonly called the moral virtues. And among these he gives the first place to justice, which he seems to consider, by too lax an use of terms or too imperfect an analogy, as comprehending the social duties of liberality, courtesy, and domestic affection. The right of property, which is the foundation of justice, he rests entirely on its necessity for the common good: whatever is required for that prime end of moral action being itself obligatory on moral agents, they are bound to establish and to maintain separate rights. And all right so wholly depends on this instrumentality to good, that the rightful sovereignty of God over his creatures is not founded on that relation which he bears to them as their Maker, much less on his mere power, but on his wisdom and goodness, through which his omnipotence works only for their happiness. But this happiness can only be attained by means of an absolute right over them in their Maker, which is therefore to be reckoned a natural law.

31. The good of all rational beings is a complex whole, being nothing but the aggregate of good enjoyed by each. We can only act in our proper spheres, laboring to do good. But this labor will be fruitless, or rather mischievous, if we do not keep in mind the higher gradations which terminate in

<sup>1</sup> "Sua cujusque felicitas est pars valde exigua finis illius, quem vir verè rationalis persequitur, et ad totum finem, scilicet communio bonum, cui a natura seu a Deo intertextur, cum tantum habet

rationem quam habet unus homo ad aggregatum ex omnibus rationalibus, quam minor est quam habet unus æquus ad molem universi corporis." - *Book. IV. and sect. 23.*

universal benevolence. No man must seek his own advantage otherwise than that of his family permits; or provide for his family to the detriment of his country; or promote the good of his country at the expense of mankind; or serve mankind, if it were possible, without regard to the majesty of God.<sup>1</sup> It is indeed sufficient that the mind should acknowledge and recollect this principle of conduct, without having it present on every single occasion. But, where moral difficulties arise, Cumberland contends that the general good is the only measure by which we are to determine the lawfulness of actions, or the preference due to one above another.

32. In conclusion he passes to political authority, deriving it from the same principle, and comments with severity and success, though in the verbose style usual to him, on the system of Hobbes. It is, however, worthy of remark, that he not only peremptorily declares the irresponsibility of the supreme magistrate in all cases, but seems to give him a more arbitrary latitude in the choice of measures, so long as he does not violate the chief negative precepts of the Decalogue, than is consistent with his own fundamental rule of always seeking the greatest good. He endeavors to throw upon Hobbes, as was not uncommon with the latter's theological opponents, the imputation of encouraging rebellion while he seemed to support absolute power; and observes with full as much truth, that, if kings are bound by no natural law, the reason for their institution, namely, the security of mankind, assigned by the author of the *Leviathan*, falls to the ground.

33. I have gone rather at length into a kind of analysis of this treatise because it is now very little read, and yet was of great importance in the annals of ethical philosophy. It was, if not a text-book in either of our universities, concerning which I am not confident, the basis of the system therein taught, and of the books which have had most influence in this country. Hutcheson, Law, Paley, Priestley, Bentham, belong, no doubt some of them unconsciously, to the school founded by Cumberland. Hutcheson adopted the principle of general benevolence as the standard of virtue; but, by limiting the definition of good to happiness alone, he simplified the scheme of Cumberland, who had included conservation and enlargement of capacity in its definition. He rejected also what encumbers the whole sys-

Remarks on  
Cumber-  
land's the-  
ory.

<sup>1</sup> Cap. viii. sect. 14, 15.

tem of his predecessor,—the including the Supreme Being among those rational agents whose good we are bound to promote. The schoolmen, as well as those whom they followed, deeming it necessary to predicate metaphysical infinity of all the divine attributes, reckoned unalterable beatitude in the number. Upon such a subject no wise man would like to dogmatize. The difficulties on both sides are very great, and perhaps among the most intricate to which the momentous problem concerning the cause of evil has given rise. Cumberland, whose mind does not seem to have been much framed to wrestle with mysteries, evades, in his lax verbosity, what might perplex his readers.

34. In establishing the will of a supreme lawgiver as essential to the law of nature, he is followed by the bishop of Carlisle and Paley, as well as by the majority of English moralists in the eighteenth century. But while Paley deems the recognition of a future state so essential, that he even includes in the definition of virtue that it is performed "for the sake of everlasting happiness," Cumberland not only omits this erroneous and almost paradoxical condition, but very slightly alludes to another life, though he thinks it probable from the stings of conscience and on other grounds; resting the whole argument on the certain consequences of virtue and vice in the present, but guarding justly against the supposition that any difference of happiness in moral agents can affect the immediate question except such as is the mere result of their own behavior. If any one had urged, like Paley, that, unless we take a future state into consideration, the result of calculating our own advantage will either not always be in favor of virtue, or, in consequence of the violence of passion, will not always seem so, Cumberland would probably have denied the former alternative, and replied to the other, that we can only prove the truth of our theorems in moral philosophy, and cannot compel men to adopt them.

35. Sir James Mackintosh, whose notice of Cumberland is rather too superficial, and hardly recognizes his influence on philosophy, observes that "the forms of scholastic argument serve more to encumber his style than to insure his exactness."<sup>1</sup> There is not, however, much of scholastic form in the treatise on the Laws of Nature; and this is expressly disclaimed in the preface. But he has, as we have intimated, a

<sup>1</sup> *Dissertation on Ethical Philosophy*, p. 48.

great deal too much of a mathematical line of argument which never illustrates his meaning, and has sometimes misled his judgment. We owe probably to his fondness for this specious illusion, I mean the application of reasonings upon quantity to moral subjects, the dangerous sophism, that a direct calculation of the highest good, and that not relatively to particulars, but to all rational beings, is the measure of virtuous actions, the test by which we are to try our own conduct and that of others. And the intervention of general rules, by which Paley endeavored to dilute and render palatable this calculating scheme of utility, seems no more to have occurred to Cumberland than it was adopted by Bentham.

36. Thus, as Taylor's *Ductor Dubitantium* is nearly the last of a declining school, Cumberland's *Law of Nature* may be justly considered as the herald, especially in England, of a new ethical philosophy, of which the main characteristics were, first, that it stood complete in itself without the aid of revelation; secondly, that it appealed to no authority of earlier writers whatever, though it sometimes used them in illustration; thirdly, that it availed itself of observation and experience, alleging them generally, but abstaining from particular instances of either, and making, above all, no display of erudition; and, fourthly, that it entered very little upon casuistry, leaving the application of principles to the reader.

37. In the same year, 1672, a work still more generally distinguished than that of Cumberland was published at Lund, in Sweden, by Samuel Puffendorf, a Saxon by birth, who filled the chair of moral philosophy in that recently-founded university. This large treatise, *On the Law of Nature and Nations*, in eight books, was abridged by the author, but not without some variations, in one perhaps more useful, *On the Duties of a Man and a Citizen*. Both have been translated into French and English: both were long studied in the foreign universities, and even in our own. Puffendorf has been perhaps, in moral philosophy, of greater authority than Grotius, with whom he is frequently named in conjunction; but this is not the case in international jurisprudence.

38. Puffendorf, after a very diffuse and technical chapter on moral beings, or modes, proceeds to assert a demonstrative certainty in moral science, but seems not to maintain an inherent right and wrong in actions ante-

Puffendorf's  
Law of  
Nature and  
Nations.

Analysis of  
this work.



cedent to all law ; referring the rule of morality altogether to the divine appointment. He ends, however, by admitting that man's constitution being what it is, God could not without inconsistency have given him any other law than that under which he lives.<sup>1</sup> We discern good from evil by the understanding, which judgment, when exercised on our own actions, is called conscience ; but he strongly protests against any such jurisdiction of conscience, independent of reason and knowledge, as some have asserted. This notion "was first introduced by the schoolmen, and has been maintained in these latter ages by the crafty casuists for the better securing of men's minds and fortunes to their own fortune and advantage."<sup>2</sup> Puffendorf was a good deal imbued with the Lutheran bigotry which did no justice to any religion but its own.

39. Law alone creates obligation : no one can be obliged except towards a superior. But, to compel and to oblige being different things, it is required for this latter that we should have received some great good at the hands of a superior, or have voluntarily submitted to his will. This seems to involve an antecedent moral right, which Puffendorf's general theory denies.<sup>3</sup> Barbeyrac, his able and watchful commentator, derives obligation from our natural dependence on the supreme authority of God, who can punish the disobedient and reward others. In order to make laws obligatory, it is necessary, according to Puffendorf, that we should know both the law and the lawgiver's authority. Actions are good or evil, as they conform more or less to law. And, coming to consider the peculiar qualities of moral actions, he introduces the distinction of perfect and imperfect rights, objecting to that of Grotius and the Roman lawyers, expletive and distributive justice.<sup>4</sup> This first book of Puffendorf is very diffuse ; and some chapters are wholly omitted in the abridgment.

40. The natural state of man, such as in theory we may suppose, is one in which he was never placed, "thrown into the world at a venture, and then left entirely to himself" with no larger endowments of body or mind than such as we now discover in men." This, however, he seems to think physically possible to have been, which I should incline to question. Man, in a state of nature, is subject to no earthly superior ; but we must not infer thence that he is incapable of law, and has a right to every thing that is profitable to himself. But

<sup>1</sup> C. 2.<sup>2</sup> C. 8.<sup>3</sup> C. 6.<sup>4</sup> C. 7.

after discussing the position of Hobbes, that a state of nature is a state of war, he ends by admitting that the desire of peace is too weak and uncertain a security for its preservation among mankind.<sup>1</sup>

41. The law of nature he derives not from consent of nations, nor from personal utility, but from the condition of man. It is discoverable by reason: its obligation is from God. He denies that it is founded on the intrinsic honesty or turpitude of actions. It was free to God whether he would create an animal to whom the present law of nature should be applicable. But, supposing all things human to remain constant, the law of nature, though owing its institution to the free will of God, remains unalterable. He therefore neither agrees wholly with those who deem of this law as of one arbitrary and mutable at God's pleasure, nor with those who look upon it as an image of his essential holiness and justice. For he doubts whether the law of nature is altogether conformed to the divine attributes as to a type; since we cannot acquire a right with respect to God: so that his justice must be of a different kind from ours. Common consent, again, is an insufficient basis of natural law, few men having searched into the foundations of their assent, even if we could find a more general consent than is the case. And here he expatiates, in the style of Montaigne's school, on the variety of moral opinions.<sup>2</sup> Puffendorf next attacks those who resolve right into self-interest. But unfortunately he only proves that men often mistake their interest. "It is a great mistake to fancy it will be profitable to you to take away either by fraud or violence what another man has acquired by his labor; since others have not only the power of resisting you, but of taking the same freedom with your goods and possessions."<sup>3</sup> This is evidently no answer to Hobbes or Spinoza.

42. The nature of man, his wants, his powers of doing mischief to others, his means of mutual assistance, show that he cannot be supported in things necessary and convenient to him without society, so that others may promote his interests. Hence sociableness is a primary law of nature; and all actions tending towards it are commanded, as the opposite are forbidden, by that law. In this he agrees with Grotius; and, after he had become acquainted with Cumberland's work,

<sup>1</sup> Lib. II. c. 2.<sup>2</sup> C. 2.<sup>3</sup> C. 2.

observes that the fundamental law of that writer, to live for the common good and show benevolence towards all men, does not differ from his own. He partly explains, and partly answers, the theory of Hobbes. From Grotius he dissents in denying that the law of nature would be binding without religion, but does not think the soul's immortality essential to it.<sup>1</sup> The best division of natural law is into duties towards ourselves and towards others. But in the abridged work, the Duties of a Man and a Citizen, he adds those towards God.

43. The former class of duties he illustrates with much prolixity and needless quotation,<sup>2</sup> and passes to the right of self-defence, which seems to be the debatable frontier between the two classes of obligation. In this chapter, Puffendorf is free from the extreme scrupulousness of Grotius; yet he differs from him, as well as from Barbeyrac and Locke, in denying the right of attacking the aggressor, where a stranger has been injured, unless where we are bound to him by promise.<sup>3</sup>

44. All persons, as is evident, are bound to repair wilful injury, and even that arising from their neglect; but not where they have not been in fault.<sup>4</sup> Yet the civil action *ob pauperiem*, for casual damage by a beast or slave, which Grotius held to be merely of positive law, and which our own (in the only applicable case) does not recognize, Puffendorf thinks grounded on natural right. He considers several questions of reparation, chiefly such as we find in Grotius. From these, after some intermediate disquisitions on moral duties, he comes to the more extensive province of casuistry,—the obligation of promises.<sup>5</sup> These, for the most part, give perfect rights which may be enforced, though this is not universal: hence promises may themselves be called imperfect or perfect. The former, or *nuda pacta*, seem to be obligatory rather by the rules of veracity, and for the sake of maintaining confidence among men, than in strict justice; yet he endeavors to refute the opinion of a jurist, who held *nuda pacta* to involve no obligation beyond a compensation for damage. Free consent and knowledge of the whole subject are required for the validity of a promise: hence drunkenness takes away its obligation.<sup>6</sup> Whether a minor is bound in conscience, though not in law, has been disputed: the Romish casuists all denying it, unless he has received an advantage:

<sup>1</sup> C. 2.<sup>2</sup> C. 4.<sup>3</sup> C. 5.<sup>4</sup> Lib. III. c. 1.<sup>5</sup> C. 5.<sup>6</sup> C. 6.

*La Placette*, it seems, after the time of *Puffendorf*, though a very rigid moralist, confines the obligation to cases where the other party sustains any real damage by the non-performance. The world, in some instances at least, would exact more than the strictest casuists. Promises were invalidated, though not always mutual contracts, by error; and fraud in the other party annuls a contract. There can be no obligation, *Puffendorf* maintains, without a corresponding right: hence fear arising from the fault of the other party invalidates a promise. But those made to pirates or rebels, not being extorted by fear, are binding. Vows to God he deems not binding, unless accepted by him; but he thinks that we may presume their acceptance when they serve to define or specify an indeterminate duty.<sup>1</sup> Unlawful promises must not be performed by the party promising to commit an evil act; and, as to performance of the other party's promise, he differs from *Grotius* in thinking it not binding. *Barbeyrac* concurs with *Puffendorf*, but *Paley* holds the contrary; and the common sentiments of mankind seem to be on that side.<sup>2</sup>

45. The obligations of veracity, *Puffendorf*, after much needless prolixity on the nature of signs and words, deduces from a tacit contract among mankind, that words, or signs of intention, shall be used in a definite sense which others may understand.<sup>3</sup> He is rather fond of these imaginary compacts. The laxer casuists are in nothing more distinguishable from the more rigid than in the exceptions they allow to the general rule of veracity. Many, like *Augustin* and most of the fathers, have laid it down that all falsehood is unlawful; even some of the jurists, when treating of morality, had done the same. But *Puffendorf* gives considerable latitude to deviations from truth, by mental reserve, by ambiguous words, by direct falsehood. *Barbeyrac*, in a long note, goes a good deal farther, and indeed beyond any safe limit.<sup>4</sup> An oath, according to these writers, adds no peculiar obligation; another remarkable discrepancy between their system and that of the

<sup>1</sup> C. 6.<sup>2</sup> C. 7.<sup>3</sup> L. iv. c. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Barbeyrac* admits that several writers of authority since *Puffendorf* had maintained the strict obligation of veracity for Macowenake; Thomassin, Biddetus, Noddt, and, above all, *La Placette*. His own notions are too much the other way, both according to the received standard of honorable and decorous character among men,

and according to any sound theory of ethics. Lying, he says, as condemned in Scripture, always means fraud or injury to others. His doctrine is, that we are to speak the truth, or to be silent, or to feign and dissimble, according as our lawful interest, or that of our relations may demand it. This is surely as unwholesome one way as any paradox in *Augustine* or *La Placette* can be the other.



theological casuists. Oaths may be released by the party in favor of whom they are made; but it is necessary to observe whether the dispensing authority is really the obligee.

46. We now advance to a different part of moral philosophy, — the rights of property. Puffendorf first inquires into the natural right of killing animals for food; but does not defend it very well, resting this right on the want of mutual obligation between man and brutes. The arguments from physiology, and the manifest propensity in mankind to devour animals, are much stronger. He censures cruelty towards animals, but hardly on clear grounds: the disregard of moral emotion, which belongs to his philosophy, prevents his judging it rightly.<sup>1</sup> Property itself in things he grounds on an express or tacit contract of mankind, while all was yet in common, that each should possess a separate portion. This covenant he supposes to have been gradually extended, as men perceived the advantage of separate possession, lands having been cultivated in common after severalty had been established in houses and movable goods; and he refutes those who maintain property to be coeval with mankind, and immediately founded on the law of nature.<sup>2</sup> Nothing can be the subject of property which is incapable of exclusive occupation; not therefore the ocean, though some narrow seas may be appropriated.<sup>3</sup> In the remainder of this fourth book, he treats on a variety of subjects connected with property, which carry us over a wide field of natural and positive jurisprudence.

47. The fifth book of Puffendorf relates to price, and to all contracts onerous or lucrative, according to the distinction of the jurists, with the rules of their interpretation. It is a running criticism on the Roman law, comparing it with right, reason, and justice. Price he divides into proper and eminent: the first being what we call real value, or capacity of procuring things desirable by means of exchange; the second, the money value. What is said on this subject would now seem commonplace and prolix; but it is rather interesting to observe the beginnings of political economy. Money, he thinks, was introduced by an agreement of civilized nations, as a measure of value. Puffendorf, of more enlarged views than Grotius, vindicates usury, which the other had given up;

<sup>1</sup> C. 8.

<sup>2</sup> C. 4. Barbeyrac more wisely denies this assumed compact, and rests the right of property on individual occupancy.

<sup>3</sup> C. 6.

and mentions the evasions usually practised, such as the grant of an annuity for a limited term.

48. In the sixth book, we have disquisitions on matrimony and the rights incident to it, on paternal and on herile power. Among other questions, he raises one whether the husband has any natural dominion over the wife. This he thinks hard to prove, except as his sex gives him an advantage; but fitness to govern does not create a right. He has recourse, therefore, to his usual solution, — her tacit or express promise of obedience. Polygamy he deems contrary to the law of nature, but not incest, except in the direct line. This is consonant to what had been the general determination of philosophers.<sup>1</sup> The right of parents he derives from the general duty of sociableness, which makes preservation of children necessary, and on the affection implanted in them by nature; also on a presumed consent of the children in return for their maintenance.<sup>2</sup> In a state of nature, this command belongs to the mother, unless she has waived it by a matrimonial contract. In childhood, the fruits of the child's labor belong to the father, though the former seems to be capable of receiving gifts. Fathers, as heads of families, have a kind of sovereignty, distinct from the paternal, to which adult children residing with them are submitted. But after their emancipation, by leaving their father's house, which does not absolutely require his consent, they are bound only to duty and reverence. The power of a master over his servant is not by nature, nor by the law of war, but originally by a contract founded on necessity. War increased the number of those in servitude. A slave, whatever Hobbes may say, is capable of being injured by his master; but the laws of some nations give more power to the latter than is warranted by those of nature. Servitude implies only an obligation to perpetual labor for a recompense (namely, at least maintenance): the evil necessary to this condition has been much exaggerated by opinion.<sup>3</sup>

49. Puffendorf and Cumberland are the two great promoters, if not founders, of that school in ethics, which, abandoning the higher ground of both philosophers and theologians, that of an intrinsic fitness and propriety in actions, resolved them all into their conduciveness towards good. Their *utile*, indeed, is very different from what

Puffendorf  
and Paley  
compared.

<sup>1</sup> L. vi. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C. 2.

<sup>3</sup> C. 3.

Cicero has so named, which is merely personal; but it is different also from his *honestum*. The sociableness of Puffendorf is perhaps much the same with the general good of Cumberland, but is somewhat less comprehensive and less clear. Paley, who had not read a great deal, had certainly read Puffendorf: he has borrowed from him several minor illustrations, such as the equivocal promise of Timur (called by Paley, Temures) to the garrison of Sebastia, and the rules for division of profits in partnership. Their minds were in some respects alike; both phlegmatic, honest, and sincere, without warmth or fancy; yet there seems a more thorough good-nature and kindness of heart in our countryman. Though an ennobled German, Puffendorf had as little respect for the law of honor as Paley himself. They do not, indeed, resemble each other in their modes of writing: one was very laborious, the other very indolent; one sometimes misses his mark by circuitry, the other by precipitance. The quotations in Puffendorf are often as thickly strewed as in Grotius, though he takes less from the poets; but he seems not to build upon their authority, which gives them still more the air of superfluity. His theory, indeed, which assigns no weight to any thing but a close geometrical deduction from axioms, is incompatible with much deference to authority; and he sets aside the customs of mankind as unstable and arbitrary. He has not taken much from Hobbes, whose principles are far from his, but a great deal from Grotius. The leading difference between the treatises of these celebrated men is, that, while the former contemplated the law that ought to be observed among independent communities as his primary object, to render which more evident he lays down the fundamental principles of private right or the law of nature, the latter, on the other hand, not only begins with natural law, but makes it the great theme of his inquiries.

50. Few books have been more highly extolled or more severely blamed than the *Thoughts or Maxims* of the Duke of La Rochefoucault. They have, indeed, the greatest advantages for popularity; the production of a man less distinguished by his high rank than by his active participation in the factions of his country at a time when they reached the limits of civil war, and by his brilliancy among the accomplished courtiers of Louis XIV.; concise and energetic in expression; reduced to those short aphorisms

Rochefoucault.

which leave much to the reader's acuteness, and yet save his labor; not often obscure, and never wearisome; an evident generalization of long experience, without pedantry, without method, without deductive reasonings, yet wearing an appearance at least of profundity,—they delight the intelligent though indolent man of the world, and must be read with some admiration by the philosopher. Among the books in ancient and modern times which record the conclusions of observing men on the moral qualities of their fellows, a high place should be reserved for the *Maxims* of Rochefoucault.

51. The censure that has so heavily fallen upon this writer is founded on his proneness to assign a low and selfish motive to human actions, and even to those which are most usually denominated virtuous. It is impossible to dispute the partial truth of this charge. Yet it may be pleaded, that many of his maxims are not universal even in their enunciation; and that, in others, where, for the sake of a more effective expression, the position seems general, we ought to understand it with such limitations as our experience may suggest. The society with which the Duke of La Rochefoucault was conversant could not elevate his notions of disinterested probity in man, or of unblemished purity in woman. Those who call themselves the world, it is easy to perceive, set aside, in their remarks on human nature, all the species but themselves, and sometimes generalize their maxims, to an amusing degree, from the manners and sentiments which have grown up in the atmosphere of a court or an aristocratic society. Rochefoucault was of far too reflecting a mind to be confounded with such mere worldlings; yet he bears witness to the contracted observation and the precipitate inferences which an intercourse with a single class of society scarcely fails to generate. The causticity of Rochefoucault is always directed against the false virtues of mankind, but never touches the reality of moral truths, and leaves us less injured than the cold, heartless indifference to right which distils from the pages of Hobbes. Nor does he deal in those sweeping denials of goodness to human nature which are so frequently hazarded under the mask of religion. His maxims are not exempt from defects of a different kind: they are sometimes refined to a degree of obscurity, and sometimes, under an epigrammatic turn, convey little more than a trivial meaning. Perhaps, however, it would be just to say that one-third of the number deserve



to be remembered, as at least partially true and useful; and this is a large proportion, if we exclude all that are not in some measure original.

52. The Characters of La Bruyère, published in 1687, approach to the Maxims of La Rochefoucault by their refinement, their brevity, their general tendency to an unfavorable explanation of human conduct. This, nevertheless, is not so strongly marked; and the picture of selfishness wants the darkest touches of his contemporary's coloring. La Bruyère had a model in antiquity, — Theophrastus, whose short book of Characters he had himself translated, and prefixed to his own; a step not impolitic for his own glory, since the Greek writer, with no contemptible degree of merit, has been incomparably surpassed by his imitator. Many changes in the condition of society; the greater diversity of ranks and occupations in modern Europe; the influence of women over the other sex, as well as their own varieties of character and manners; the effects of religion, learning, chivalry, royalty, — have given a range to this very pleasing department of moral literature, which no ancient could have compassed. Nor has Theophrastus taken much pains to search the springs of character; his delineations are bold and clear, but merely in outline; we see more of manners than of nature, and the former more in general classes than in portraiture. La Bruyère has often painted single persons; whether accurately or no, we cannot at this time determine, but with a felicity of description which at once renders the likeness probable, and suggests its application to those we ourselves have seen. His general reflections, like those of Rochefoucault, are brilliant with antithesis and epigrammatic conciseness; sometimes perhaps not quite just or quite perspicuous. But he pleases more, on the whole, from his greater variety, his greater liveliness, and his gentler spirit of raillery. Nor does he forget to mingle the praise of some with his satire. But he is rather a bold writer for his age and his position in the court; and what looks like flattery may well have been ironical. Few have been more imitated, as well as more admired, than La Bruyère, who fills up the list of those whom France has boasted as most conspicuous for their knowledge of human nature. The others are Montaigne, Charron, Pascal, and Rochefoucault; but we might withdraw the second name without injustice.

53. Moral philosophy comprehends in its literature whatever has been written on the best theory and precepts of moral education, disregarding what is confined to erudition, though this may frequently be partially treated in works of the former class. Education, notwithstanding its recognized importance, was miserably neglected in England, and quite as much perhaps in every part of Europe. Schools, kept by low-born, illiberal pedants, teaching little, and that little ill, without regard to any judicious discipline or moral culture, on the one hand, or, on the other, a pretence of instruction at home under some ignorant and servile tutor, seem to have been the alternatives of our juvenile gentry. Milton raised his voice against these faulty methods in his short Tractate on Education. This abounds with bursts of his elevated spirit; and sketches out a model of public colleges, wherein the teaching should be more comprehensive, more liberal, more accommodated to what he deems the great aim of education, than what was in use. "That," he says, "I call a complete and generous education which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war." But, when Milton descends to specify the course of studies he would recommend, it appears singularly ill-chosen and impracticable, nearly confined to ancient writers, even in mathematics and other subjects where they could not be sufficient, and likely to leave the student very far from that aptitude for offices of war and peace which he had held forth as the reward of his diligence.

Education.  
Milton's  
Tractate

54. Locke, many years afterwards, turned his thoughts to education with all the advantages that a strong understanding and entire disinterestedness could give him; but, as we should imagine, with some necessary deficiencies of experience, though we hardly perceive much of them in his writings. He looked on the methods usual in his age with severity, or, some would say, with prejudice; yet I know not by what proof we can refute his testimony. In his Treatise on Education, which may be reckoned an introduction to that on the Conduct of the Understanding, since the latter is but a scheme of that education an adult person should give himself, he has uttered, to say the least, more good sense on the subject than will be found in any preceding writer. Locke was not like the pedants of his own or other

Locke on  
Education.  
Its merits,

ages, who think that to pour their wordy book-learning into the memory is the true discipline of childhood. The culture of the intellectual and moral faculties in their most extensive sense, the health of the body, the accomplishments which common utility or social custom has rendered valuable, enter into his idea of the best model of education, conjointly at least with any knowledge that can be imparted by books. The ancients had written in the same spirit: in Xenophon, in Plato, in Aristotle, the noble conception which Milton has expressed, of forming the perfect man, is always predominant over mere literary instruction, if indeed the latter can be said to appear at all in their writings on this subject; but we had become the dupes of schoolmasters in our riper years, as we had been their slaves in our youth. Much has been written, and often well, since the days of Locke: but he is the chief source from which it has been ultimately derived; and, though the *Emile* is more attractive in manner, it may be doubtful whether it is as rational and practicable as the *Treatise on Education*. If they have both the same defect, that their authors wanted sufficient observation of children, it is certain that the caution and sound judgment of Locke have rescued him better from error.

55. There are, indeed, from this or from other causes, several passages in the *Treatise on Education* to which  
*And defects.* we cannot give an unhesitating assent. Locke appears to have somewhat exaggerated the efficacy of education. This is an error on the right side in a work that aims at persuasion in a practical matter; but we are now looking at theoretical truth alone. "I think I may say," he begins, "that, of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. It is this which makes the great difference in mankind. The little or almost insensible impressions on our tender infancies have very important and lasting consequences; and there 'tis as in the fountains of some rivers, where a gentle application of the hand turns the flexible waters into channels that make them take quite contrary courses; and, by this little direction given them at first in the source, they receive different tendencies, and arrive at last at very remote and distant places." "I imagine," he adds soon afterwards, "the minds of children as easily turned this or that way as water itself."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Treatise on Education*, § 2. "The difference," he afterwards says, "is to be

56. This passage is an instance of Locke's unfortunate fondness for analogical parallels, which, as far as I have observed, much more frequently obscure a philosophical theorem than shed any light upon it. Nothing would be easier than to confirm the contrary proposition by such fanciful analogies from external nature. In itself, the position is hyperbolical to extravagance. It is no more disparagement to the uses of education, that it will not produce the like effects upon every individual, than it is to those of agriculture (I purposely use this sort of idle analogy), that we do not reap the same quantity of corn from every soil. Those who are conversant with children on a large scale will, I believe, unanimously deny this levelling efficacy of tuition. The variety of characters even in children of the same family, where the domestic associations of infancy have run in the same trains, and where many physical congenialities may produce, and ordinarily do produce, a moral resemblance, is of sufficiently frequent occurrence to prove that in human beings there are intrinsic dissimilarities, which no education can essentially overcome. Among mere theorists, however, this hypothesis seems to be popular. And as many of these extend their notion of the plasticity of human nature to the effects of government and legislation, which is a sort of continuance of the same controlling power, they are generally induced to disregard past experience of human affairs, because they flatter themselves, that, under a more scientific administration, mankind will become something very different from what they have been.

57. In the age of Locke, if we may confide in what he tells us, the domestic education of children must have been of the worst kind. "If we look," he says, "into the common management of children, we shall have reason to wonder, in the great dissoluteness of manners which the world complains of, that there are any footsteps at all left of virtue. I desire to know what vice can be named which parents and those about children do not season them with, and drop into them the seeds of, as often as they are capable to receive them." The mode of treatment seems to have been passionate and often barbarous severity alternating with foolish indulgence. Their spirits were often broken down, and their ingenuousness

found in the manners and abilities of men is owing more to their education than to any thing else."—§ 32



destroyed, by the former; their habits of self-will and sensuality confirmed by the latter. This was the method pursued by parents; but the pedagogues of course confined themselves to their favorite scheme of instruction and reformation by punishment. Dugald Stewart has animadverted on the austerity of Locke's rules of education.<sup>1</sup> And this is certainly the case in some respects. He recommends that children should be taught to expect nothing because it will give them pleasure, but only what will be useful to them; a rule fit, in its rigid meaning, to destroy the pleasure of the present moment, in the only period of life that the present moment can be really enjoyed. No father himself, Locke neither knew how ill a parent can spare the love of his child, nor how ill a child can want the constant and practical sense of a parent's love. But, if he was led too far by deprecating the mischievous indulgence he had sometimes witnessed, he made some amends by his censures on the prevalent discipline of stripes. Of this he speaks with the disapprobation natural to a mind already schooled in the habits of reason and virtue.<sup>2</sup> "I cannot think any correction useful to a child where the shame of suffering for having done amiss does not work more upon him than the pain." Esteem and disgrace are the rewards and punishments to which he principally looks. And surely this is a noble foundation for moral discipline. He also recommends that children should be much with their parents, and allowed all reasonable liberty. I cannot think that Stewart's phrase "hardness of character," which he accounts for by the early intercourse of Locke with the Puritans, is justly applicable to any thing that we know of him; and many more passages in this very treatise might be adduced to prove his kindliness of disposition, than will appear to any judicious person over-austere. He found, in fact, every thing wrong; a false system of reward and punishment, a false view of the objects of education, a false selection of studies, false methods of pursuing them. Where so much was to be corrected, it

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary Dissertation to Encyclop. Britan.

<sup>2</sup> "If severity carried to the highest pitch does prevail, and works a cure upon the present unruly distemper, it is often bringing in the ruin of it a worse and more dangerous disease by breaking the mind; and then, in the place of a disorderly young fellow, you have a low-spirited

ed moped creature, who however with his unnatural sobriety he may please silly people, who commend to us, inactive children, because they make no noise, nor give them any trouble; yet at last will probably prove as uncomfortable a thing to his friends, as he will be all his life an useless thing to himself and others." § 61.

was perhaps natural to be too sanguine about the effects of the remedy.

58. Of the old dispute as to public and private education, he says, that both sides have their inconveniences, but inclines to prefer the latter, influenced, as is evident, rather by disgust at the state of our schools than by any general principle.<sup>1</sup> For he insists much on the necessity of giving a boy a sufficient knowledge of what he is to expect in the world. "The longer he is kept hoodwinked, the less he will see when he comes abroad into open daylight, and be the more exposed to be a prey to himself and others." But this experience will, as is daily seen, not be supplied by a tutor's lectures, any more than by books; nor can be given by any course save a public education. Locke urges the necessity of having a tutor well-bred, and with knowledge of the world, the ways, the humors, the follies, the cheats, the faults of the age he is fallen into, and particularly of the country he lives in, as of far more importance than his scholarship. "The only fence against the world is a thorough knowledge of it. . . . He that thinks not this of more moment to his son, and for which he more needs a governor, than the languages and learned sciences, forgets of how much more use it is to judge right of men and manage his affairs wisely with them, than to speak Greek and Latin, and argue in mood and figure, or to have his head filled with the abstruse speculations of natural philosophy and metaphysics; nay, than to be well versed in Greek and Roman writers, though that be much better for a gentleman than to be a good Peripatetic or Cartesian; because these ancient authors observed and painted mankind well, and give the best light into that kind of knowledge. He that goes into the eastern parts of Asia will find able and acceptable men without any of these; but without virtue, knowledge of the world, and civility, an accomplished and valuable man can be found nowhere."<sup>2</sup>

59. It is to be remembered, that the person whose education Locke undertakes to fashion is an English gentleman. Virtue, wisdom, breeding, and learning, are desirable for such a one in their order, but the last not so much as the rest.<sup>3</sup> It must be had, he says, but only as subservient to greater qualities. No objections have been more frequently raised against the scheme of Locke than on account of his depreciation of

<sup>1</sup> § 70.<sup>2</sup> § 94.<sup>3</sup> § 128.

classical literature and of the study of the learned languages. This is not wholly true: Latin he reckons absolutely necessary for a gentleman, though it is absurd that those should learn Latin who are designed for trade, and never look again at a Latin book.<sup>1</sup> If he lays not so much stress on Greek as a gentleman's study, though he by no means would abandon it, it is because, in fact, most gentlemen, especially in his age, have done very well without it; and nothing can be deemed indispensable in education of a child, the want of which does not leave a manifest deficiency in the man. "No man," he observes, "can pass for a scholar who is ignorant of the Greek language. But I am not here considering of the education of a professed scholar, but of a gentleman."<sup>2</sup>

60. The peculiar methods recommended by Locke in learning languages, especially the Latin, appear to be of very doubtful utility, though some of them do not want strenuous supporters in the present day. Such are the method of interlinear translation, the learning of mere words without grammar, and, above all, the practice of talking Latin with a tutor who speaks it well, — a phoenix whom he has not shown us where to find.<sup>3</sup> In general, he seems to underrate the difficulty of acquiring what even he would call a competent learning, and, what is of more importance and no rare mistake in those who write on this subject, to confound the acquisition of a language with the knowledge of its literature. The best ancient writers both in Greek and Latin furnish so much of wise reflection, of noble sentiment, of all that is beautiful and salutary, that no one who has had the happiness to know and feel what they are, will desire to see their study excluded or stinted in its just extent, wherever the education of those who are to be the first and best of the country is carried forward. And though by far the greater portion of mankind must, by the very force of terms, remain in the ranks of intellectual mediocrity, it is an ominous sign of any times when no thought is taken for those who may rise beyond it.

61. In every other part of instruction, Locke has still no eye to what is useful for a gentleman. French he justly thinks should be taught before Latin: no geometry is required by him beyond Euclid; but he recommends geography, history and chronology, drawing, and, what may be thought now as little necessary for a gentleman as Homer, the jurisprudence

<sup>1</sup> § 189.<sup>2</sup> § 195.<sup>3</sup> § 195.

of Grotius and Puffendorf. He strongly urges the writing English well, though a thing commonly neglected; and, after speaking with contempt of the artificial systems of logic and rhetoric, sends the pupil to Chillingworth for the best example of reasoning, and to Tully for the best idea of eloquence. "And let him read those things that are well writ in English to perfect his style in the purity of our language."<sup>1</sup>

62. It would be to transcribe half this treatise, were we to mention all the judicious and minute observations on the management of children it contains. Whatever may have been Locke's opportunities, he certainly availed himself of them to the utmost. It is as far as possible from a theoretical book; and, in many respects, the best of modern times, such as those of the Edgeworth name, might pass for developments of his principles. The patient attention to every circumstance, a peculiar characteristic of the genius of Locke, is in none of his works better displayed. His rules for the health of children, though sometimes trivial, since the subject has been more regarded; his excellent advice as to checking effeminacy and timorousness; his observations on their curiosity, presumption, idleness, on their plays and recreations,—bespeak an intense though calm love of truth and goodness; a quality which few have possessed more fully or known so well how to exert as this admirable philosopher.

63. No one had condescended to spare any thoughts for female education, till Fenelon, in 1688, published his earliest work, *Sur l'Education des Filles*. This Fenelon on female education was the occasion of his appointment as preceptor to the grandchildren of Louis XIV.; for much of this treatise, and perhaps the most valuable part, is equally applicable to both sexes. It may be compared with that of Locke, written nearly at the same time, and bearing a great resemblance in its spirit. Both have the education of a polished and high-bred class, rather than of scholars, before them; and Fenelon rarely loses sight of his peculiar object, or gives any rule which is not capable of being practised in female education. In many respects he coincides with our English philosopher, and observes with him that a child learns much before he speaks; so that the cultivation of his moral qualities can hardly begin too soon. Both complain of the severity of parents, and deprecate the mode of bringing up by punish-



ment. Both advise the exhibition of virtue and religion in pleasing lights, and censure the austere dogmatism with which they were inculcated, before the mind was sufficiently developed to apprehend them. But the characteristic sweetness of Fenelon's disposition is often shown in contrast with the somewhat stern inflexibility of Locke. His theory is uniformly indulgent; his method of education is a labor of love; a desire to render children happy for the time, as well as afterwards, runs through his book; and he may perhaps be considered the founder of that school which has endeavored to dissipate the terrors and dry the tears of childhood. "I have seen," he says, "many children who have learned to read in play: we have only to read entertaining stories to them out of a book, and insensibly teach them the letters; they will soon desire to go for themselves to the source of their amusement." "Books should be given them well bound and gilt, with good engravings, clear types; for all that captivates the imagination facilitates study: the choice should be such as contain short and marvellous stories." These details are now trivial; but in the days of Fenelon they may have been otherwise.

64. In several passages, he displays not only a judicious spirit, but an observation that must have been long exercised. "Of all the qualities we perceive in children," he remarks, "there is only one that can be trusted as likely to be durable, which is sound judgment: it always grows with their growth, if it is well cultivated; but the grace of childhood is effaced; its vivacity is extinguished; even its sensibility is often lost, because their own passions and the intercourse of others insensibly harden the hearts of young persons who enter into the world." It is, therefore, a solid and just way of thinking which we should most value and most improve, and this not by any means less in girls than in the other sex; since their duties, and the occupations they are called upon to fill, do not less require it. Hence he not only deprecates an excessive taste for dress, but, with more originality, points out the danger of that extreme delicacy and refinement which incapacitate women for the ordinary affairs of life, and give them a contempt for a country life and rural economy.

65. It will be justly thought at present, that he discourages too much the acquisition of knowledge by women. "Keep their minds," he says in one place, "as much as you can

within the usual limits, and let them understand that the modesty of their sex ought to shrink from science with almost as much delicacy as from vice." This seems, however, to be confined to science or philosophy in a strict sense; for he permits afterwards a larger compass of reading. Women should write a good hand, understand orthography and the four rules of arithmetic, which they will want in domestic affairs. To these he requires a close attention, and even recommends to women an acquaintance with some of the common forms and maxims of law. Greek, Roman, and French history, with the best travels, will be valuable, and keep them from seeking pernicious fictions. Books also of eloquence and poetry may be read with selection, taking care to avoid any that relate to love: music and painting may be taught with the same precaution. The Italian and Spanish languages are of no use but to enlarge their knowledge of dangerous books: Latin is better as the language of the church; but this he would recommend only for girls of good sense and discreet conduct, who will make no display of the acquisition.

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## SECT. II. — ON POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

Puffendorf — Spinoza — Harrington's Oceana — Locke on Government — Political Economy.

66. IN the seventh book of Puffendorf's great work, he comes to political philosophy, towards which he had been gradually tending for some time; primary societies, or those of families, leading the way to the consideration of civil government. Grotius derives the origin of this from the natural sociableness of mankind. But this, as Puffendorf remarks, may be satisfied by the primary societies. The real cause was experience of the injuries which one man can inflict on another.<sup>1</sup> And, after a prolix disquisition, he concludes that civil society must have been constituted, first, by a covenant of a number of men, each with each, to form a commonwealth, and to be bound by the majority, in

Puffendorf's theory of politics.

<sup>1</sup> L. vii. c. 1.

which primary covenant they must be unanimous, that is, every dissentient would retain his natural liberty; next, by a resolution or decree of the majority, that certain rulers shall govern the rest; and, lastly, by a second covenant between these rulers and the rest, — one promising to take care of the public weal, and the other to obey lawful commands.<sup>1</sup> This covenant, as he attempts to show, exists even in a democracy, though it is less evident than in other forms. Hobbes had admitted the first of these covenants, but denied the second: Barbeyrac, the able commentator on Puffendorf, has done exactly the reverse. A state once formed may be conceived to exist as one person, with a single will, represented by that of the sovereign, wherever the sovereignty may be placed. This sovereignty is founded on the covenants, and is not conferred, except indirectly like every other human power, by God. Puffendorf here combats the opposite opinion, which churchmen were as prone to hold, it seems, in Germany as in England.<sup>2</sup>

67. The legislative, punitive, and judiciary powers, those of making war and peace, of appointing magistrates, and levying taxes, are so closely connected, that no one can be denied to the sovereign. As to his right in ecclesiastical matters, Puffendorf leaves it for others to determine.<sup>3</sup> He seems in this part of the work too favorable to unlimited monarchy; declaring himself against a mixed government. The sovereign power must be irresponsible, and cannot be bound by the law which itself has given. He even denies that all government is intended for the good of the governed, — a position strangely inconsistent with his theory of a covenant; but he contends, that, if it were, this end, the public good, may be more probably discerned by the prince than by the people.<sup>4</sup> Yet he admits that the exorbitances of a prince should be restrained by certain fundamental laws, and holds that having accepted such, and ratified them by oath, he is not at liberty to break them; arguing, with some apparent inconsistency, against those who maintain such limitations to be inconsistent with monarchy, and even recommending the institution of councils, without whose consent certain acts of the sovereign shall not be valid. This can only be reconciled with his former declaration against a mixed sovereignty, by the distinction familiar to our own constitutional lawyers, between the joint acts of A. and B., and

<sup>1</sup> C. 2.<sup>2</sup> C. 3.<sup>3</sup> C. 4.<sup>4</sup> C. 5.

the acts of A. with B.'s consent. But this is a little too technical and unreal for philosophical politics. Governments not reducible to one of the three simple forms he calls irregular; such as the Roman Republic or German Empire. But there may be systems of states, or aggregate communities, either subject to one king by different titles, or united by federation. He inclines to deny that the majority can bind the minority in the latter case, and seems to take it for granted that some of the confederates can quit the league at pleasure.<sup>1</sup>

68. Sovereignty over persons cannot be acquired, strictly speaking, by seizure or occupation, as in the case of lands, and requires, even after conquest, their consent to obey; which will be given, in order to secure themselves from the other rights of war. It is a problem whether, after an unjust conquest, the forced consent of the people can give a lawful title to sovereignty. Puffendorf distinguishes between a monarchy and a republic thus unjustly subdued. In the former case, so long as the lawful heirs exist or preserve their claim, the duty of restitution continues. But in the latter, as the people may live as happily under a monarchy as under a republic, he thinks that an usurper has only to treat them well, without scruple as to his title. If he oppresses them, no course of years will make his title lawful, or bind them in conscience to obey; length of possession being only length of injury. If a sovereign has been justly divested of his power, the community becomes immediately free; but, if by unjust rebellion, his right continues till by silence he has appeared to abandon it.<sup>2</sup>

69. Every one will agree, that a lawful ruler must not be opposed within the limits of his authority. But let us put the case that he should command what is unlawful, or maltreat his subjects. Whatever Hobbes may say, a subject may be injured by his sovereign. But we should bear minor injuries patiently, and in the worst cases avoid personal resistance. Those are not to be listened to who assert that a king, degenerating into a tyrant, may be resisted and punished by his people. He admits only a right of self-defence, if he manifestly becomes a public enemy: in all this he seems to go quite as far as Grotius himself. The next question is as to the right of invaders and usurpers to obedience. This, it will be observed, he had already in some measure discussed; but

<sup>1</sup> C. 5.<sup>2</sup> C. 7.



Puffendorf is neither strict in method, nor free from repetitions. He labors much about the rights of the lawful prince, insisting upon them where the subjects have promised allegiance to the usurper. This, he thinks, must be deemed temporary, until the legitimate sovereign has recovered his dominions. But what may be done towards promoting this end by such as have sworn fidelity to the actual ruler, he does not intimate.<sup>1</sup>

70. Civil laws are such as emanate from the supreme power, with respect to things left indifferent by the laws of God and nature. What chiefly belongs to them is the form and method of acquiring rights, or obtaining redress for wrongs. If we give the law of nature all that belongs to it, and take away from the civilians what they have hitherto engrossed and promiscuously treated, we shall bring the civil law to a much narrower compass; not to say that at present, whenever the latter is deficient, we must have recourse to the law of nature, and that therefore in all commonwealths the natural laws supply the defects of the civil.<sup>2</sup> He argues against Hobbes's tenet, that the civil law cannot be contrary to the law of nature; and that what shall be deemed theft, murder, or adultery depends on the former. The subject is bound generally not to obey the unjust commands of his sovereign; but in the case of war he thinks it, on the whole, safest, considering the usual difficulties of such questions, that the subject should serve, and throw the responsibility before God on the prince.<sup>3</sup> In this problem of casuistry, common usage is wholly against the stricter theory.

71. Punishment may be defined an evil inflicted by authority upon view of antecedent transgression.<sup>4</sup> Hence exclusion, on political grounds, from public office, or separation of the sick for the sake of the healthy, is not punishment. It does not belong to distributive justice; nor is the magistrate bound to apportion it to the malignity of the offence, though this is usual. Superior authority is necessary to punishment; and he differs from Grotius by denying that we have a right to avenge the injuries of those who have no claim upon us. Punishment ought never to be inflicted without the prospect of some advantage from it; either the correction of the offender, or the prevention of his repeating the offence. But

<sup>1</sup> C. 3.

<sup>2</sup> L. viii. c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> L. viii. c. 1.

<sup>4</sup> C. 2.

example he seems not to think a direct end of punishment, though it should be regarded in its infliction. It is not necessary that all offences which the law denounces should be actually punished, though some jurists have questioned the right of pardon. Punishments ought to be measured according to the object of the crime, the injury to the commonwealth, and the malice of the delinquent. Hence offences against God should be deemed most criminal, and, next, such as disturb the state; then, whatever affect life, the peace or honor of families, private property or reputation, following the scale of the Decalogue. But, though all crimes do not require equal severity, an exact proportion of penalties is not required. Most of this chapter exhibits the vacillating, indistinct, and almost self-contradictory resolutions of difficulties so frequent in Puffendorf. He concludes by establishing a great truth, that no man can be justly punished for the offence of another; not even a community for the acts of their forefathers, notwithstanding their fictitious immortality.<sup>1</sup>

72. After some chapters on the law of nations, Puffendorf concludes with discussing the cessation of subjection. This may ordinarily be by voluntarily removing to another state with permission of the sovereign. And, if no law or custom interferes, the subject has a right to do this at his discretion. The state has not a right to expel citizens without some offence. It loses all authority over a banished man. He concludes by considering the rare case of so great a diminution of the people, as to raise a doubt of their political identity.<sup>2</sup>

73. The political portion of this large work is not, as will appear, very fertile in original or sagacious reflection. Politics of Spinoza. A greater degree of both, though by no means accompanied with a sound theory, distinguishes the Political Treatise of Spinoza; one which must not be confounded with the Theologico-political Treatise, a very different work. In this he undertakes to show how a state under a regal or aristocratic government ought to be constituted so as to secure the tranquillity and freedom of the citizens. Whether Spinoza borrowed his theory on the origin of government from Hobbes, is perhaps hard to determine: he seems acquainted with the treatise *De Cive*; but the philosophical system of both was such as, in minds habituated like theirs to close reasoning, could not lead to any other result. Political theory,

as Spinoza justly observes, is to be founded on our experience of human kind as it is, and on no visionary notions of an Utopia or golden age; and hence politicians of practical knowledge have written better on these subjects than philosophers. We must treat of men as liable to passions, prone more to revenge than to pity, eager to rule and to compel others to act like themselves, more pleased with having done harm to others than with procuring their own good. Hence no state wherein the public affairs are intrusted to any one's good faith can be secure of their due administration: but means should be devised that neither reason nor passion should induce those who govern to obstruct the public weal: it being indifferent by what motive men act, if they can be brought to act for the common good.

74. Natural law is the same as natural power: it is that which the laws of nature, that is, the order of the world, give to each individual. Nothing is forbidden by this law, except what no one desires, or what no one can perform. Thus no one is bound to keep the faith he has plighted any longer than he will, and than he judges it useful to himself: for he has not lost the power of breaking it, and power is right in natural law. But he may easily perceive, that the power of one man in a state of nature is limited by that of all the rest, and in effect is reduced to nothing, all men being naturally enemies to each other; while, on the other hand, by uniting their force and establishing bounds by common consent to the natural powers of each, it becomes really more effective than while it was unlimited. This is the principle of civil government; and now the distinctions of just and unjust, right and wrong, begin to appear.

75. The right of the supreme magistrate is nothing but the collective rights of the citizens, that is, their powers. Neither he nor they in their natural state can do wrong: but, after the institution of government, each citizen may do wrong by disobeying the magistrate; that, in fact, being the test of wrong. He has not to inquire whether the commands of the supreme power are just or unjust, pious or impious; that is, as to action: for the state has no jurisdiction over his judgment.

76. Two independent states are naturally enemies, and may make war on each other whenever they please. If they make peace or alliance, it is no longer binding than the cause, that is, hope or fear in the contracting parties, shall endure. All

this is founded on the universal law of nature, the desire of preserving ourselves; which, whether men are conscious of it or no, animates all their actions. Spinoza in this, as in his other writings, is more fearless than Hobbes; and, though he sometimes may throw a light veil over his abjuration of moral and religious principle, it is frequently placed in a more prominent view than his English precursor in the same system had deemed it secure to exhibit. Yet so slight is often the connection between theoretical tenets and human practice, that Spinoza bore the character of a virtuous and benevolent man. In this treatise of politics, especially in the broad assertion that good faith is only to be preserved so long as it is advantageous, he leaves Machiavel and Hobbes at some distance, and may be reckoned the most phlegmatically impudent of the whole school.

77. The contract or fundamental laws, he proceeds, according to which the multitude transfers its right to a king or a senate, may unquestionably be broken, when it is advantageous to the whole to do so. But Spinoza denies to private citizens the right of judging concerning the public good in such a point; reserving, apparently, to the supreme magistrate an ultimate power of breaking the conditions upon which he was chosen. Notwithstanding this dangerous admission, he strongly protests against intrusting absolute power to any one man; and observes, in answer to the common argument of the stability of despotism, as in the instance of the Turkish monarchy, that if barbarism, slavery, and desolation are to be called peace, nothing can be more wretched than peace itself. Nor is this sole power of one man a thing so possible as we imagine; the kings who seem most despotic trusting the public safety and their own to counsellors and favorites, often the worst and weakest in the state.

78. He next proceeds to his scheme of a well-regulated monarchy, which is in some measure original and ingenious. The people are to be divided into families, by which he seems to mean something like the *phurpiei* of Attica. From each of these, counsellors, fifty years of age, are to be chosen by the king, succeeding in a rotation quinquennial, or less, so as to form a numerous senate. This assembly is to be consulted upon all public affairs, and the king is to be guided by its unanimous opinion. In case, however, of disagreement, the different propositions being laid before

His theory  
of a mon-  
archy



the king, he may choose that of the minority, provided at least one hundred councillors have recommended it. The less remarkable provisions of this ideal polity it would be waste of time to mention; except that he advises that all the citizens should be armed as a militia, and that the principal towns should be fortified, and consequently, as it seems, in their power. A monarchy thus constituted would probably not degenerate into the despotic form. Spinoza appeals to the ancient government of Aragon, as a proof of the possibility of carrying his theory into execution.

79. From this imaginary monarchy he comes to an aristocratical republic. In this he seems to have taken Venice, the idol of theoretical politicians, as his primary model, but with such deviations as affect the whole scheme of government. He objects to the supremacy of an elective doge, justly observing that the precautions adopted in the election of that magistrate show the danger of the office itself, which was rather retained in the aristocratical polity as an ancient institution than from any persuasion of its usefulness. But the most remarkable discrepancy between the aristocracy of Spinoza and that of Venice is, that his great council, which ought, as he strongly urges, not to consist of less than five thousand, the greatness of its number being the only safeguard against the close oligarchy of a few families, is not to be hereditary, but its vacancies to be filled up by self-election. In this election, indeed, he considers the essence of aristocracy to consist; being, as is implied in its meaning, a government by the best, who can only be pronounced such by the choice of many. It is singular that he never adverts to popular representation, of which he must have known examples. Democracy, on the contrary, he defines to be a government where political power falls to men by chance of birth, or by some means which has rendered them citizens, and who can claim it as their right, without regard to the choice of others. And a democracy, according to Spinoza, may exist, if the law should limit this privilege of power to the seniors in age, or to the elder branches of families, or to those who pay a certain amount in taxation; although the numbers enjoying it should be a smaller portion of the community than in an aristocracy of the form he has recommended. His treatise breaks off near the beginning of the chapters intended to delineate the best model of democracy, which he declares to be one wherein

all persons in their own power, and not infamous by crime, should have a share in the public government. I do not know that it can be inferred from the writings of Spinoza, nor is his authority, perhaps, sufficient to render the question of any interest, to which of the three plans devised by him as the best in their respective forms he would have ascribed the preference.

80. The condition of France under Louis XIV. was not very tempting to speculators on political theory. Whatever short remarks may be found in those excellent writers on other subjects who distinguish this period, we can select no one book that falls readily into this class. For *Télémaque* we must find another place. It is scarcely worth while to mention the political discourses on Tacitus by Amelot de la Houssaye. These are a tedious and pedantic running commentary on Tacitus, affecting to deduce general principles, but much unlike the short and poignant observations of Machiavel and Bacon. A whole volume on the reign alone of Tiberius, and printed at Paris, is not likely to repay a reader's trouble; at least I have found nothing in it above the common level. I have no acquaintance with the other political writings of Amelot de la Houssaye, one of those who thought they could make great discoveries by analyzing the constitution of Venice and other states.

Amelot de  
la Houssaye.

81. England, thrown at the commencement of this period upon the resources of her own invention to replace an ancient monarchy by something new, and rich at that time in reflecting as well as learned men, with an unshackled press, and a growing disdain of authority as opposed to argument, was the natural soil of political theory. The earliest fruit was Sir James Harrington's *Oceana*, published in 1656. This once-famous book is a political allegory, partly suggested, perhaps, by the Dodona's Grove of Howell, or by Barclay's *Argenis*, and a few other fictions of the preceding age. His *Oceana* represents England, the history of which is shadowed out with fictitious names. But this is preliminary to the great object, the scheme of a new commonwealth, which, under the auspices of Olphaus Megaletor, the Lord Archon,—meaning, of course, Cromwell, not as he was, but as he ought to have been,—the author feigns to have been established. The various laws and constitutions of this polity occupy the whole work.

Harrington's  
*Oceana*.

82. The leading principle of Harrington is, that power depends on property; denying the common saying, that knowledge or prudence is power. But this property must be in land, "because, as to property producing empire, it is required that it should have some certain root or foothold, which except in land it cannot have; being otherwise, as it were, upon the wing. Nevertheless, in such cities as subsist mostly by trade, and have little or no land, as Holland and Genoa, the balance of treasure may be equal to that of land."<sup>1</sup> The law fixing the balance of lands is called by him agrarian; and without an agrarian law he holds that no government, whether monarchical, aristocratic, or popular, has any long duration: this is rather paradoxical; but his distribution of lands varies according to the form of the commonwealth. In one best constituted, the possession of lands is limited to £2,000 a year; which, of course, in his time was a much greater estate than at present.

83. Harrington's general scheme of a good government is one "established upon an equal agrarian arising into the superstructure, or three orders; the senate debating and proposing, the people resolving, and the magistracy executing by an equal rotation through the suffrage of the people given by the ballot." His more particular form of polity, devised for his Oceana, it would be tedious to give in detail: the result is a moderate aristocracy; property, though under the control of his agrarian, which prevents its excess, having so great a share in the elections that it must predominate. But it is an aristocracy of what we should call the middle ranks, and might not be unfit for a small state. In general, it may be said of Harrington, that he is prolix, dull, pedantic, and seldom profound; but sometimes redeems himself by just observations. Like most theoretical politicians of that age, he had an excessive admiration for the republic of Venice. His other political writings are in the same spirit as the Oceana, but still less interesting.

84. The manly republicanism of Harrington, though sometimes visionary and perhaps impracticable, shines by comparison with a very opposite theory, which, having been countenanced in the early part of the century by

<sup>1</sup> P. 28, edit. 1771.

<sup>2</sup> "If I be worthy to give advice to a man that would study politics, let him understand Venice: he that understands

Venice right, shall go nearest to judge notwithstanding the difference that is every policy, right of any government in the world." — Harrington's Works, p. 24

our clergy, revived with additional favor after the Restoration. This was maintained in the Patriarcha of Sir Robert Filmer, written, as it appears, in the reign of Charles I., but not published till 1680, at a time when very high notions of royal prerogative were as well received by one party as they were indignantly rejected by another. The object, as the author declares, was to prove that the first kings were fathers of families; that it is unnatural for the people to govern or to choose governors; that positive laws do not infringe the natural and fatherly power of kings. He refers the tenet of natural liberty and the popular origin of government to the schoolmen; allowing that all Papists and the reformed divines have imbibed it, but denying that it is found in the fathers. He seems, however, to claim the credit of an original hypothesis; those who have vindicated the rights of kings in most points not having thought of this, but with one consent admitted the natural liberty and equality of mankind. It is certain, nevertheless, that the patriarchal theory of government, as the basis of actual right, was laid down as explicitly as by himself in what is called Bishop Overall's Convocation Book, at the beginning of the reign of James I. But this book had not been published when Filmer wrote. His arguments are singularly insufficient; he quotes nothing but a few irrelevant texts from Genesis; he seems not to have known at all the strength, whatever it may be, of his own case; and it is hardly possible to find a more trifling and feeble work. It had, however, the advantage of opportunity to be received by a party with approbation.

85. Algernon Sidney was the first who devoted his time to a refutation of this patriarchal theory, propounded as it was, not as a plausible hypothesis to explain the origin of civil communities, but as a paramount title, by virtue of which all actual sovereigns, who were not manifest usurpers, were to reign with an unmitigated despotism. Sidney's Discourses on Government, not published till 1698, are a diffuse reply to Filmer. They contain, indeed, many chapters full of historical learning and judicious reflection; yet the constant anxiety to refute that which needs no refutation renders them a little tedious. Sidney does not condemn a limited monarchy like the English; but his partiality is for a form of republic which would be deemed too aristocratical for our popular theories.

Sidney's  
Discourses  
on Govern-  
ment.



86. Locke, immediately after the Revolution, attacked the Patriarcha with more brevity, and laid down his own celebrated theory of government. The fundamental principle of Filmer is, that paternal authority is naturally absolute. Adam received it from God, exercised it over his own children, and transmitted it to the eldest born for ever. This assumption Locke combats rather too diffusely, according to our notions. Filmer had not only to show this absolute monarchy of a lineal ancestor, but his power of transmitting it in course of primogeniture. Locke denies that there is any natural right of this kind, maintaining the equality of children. The incapacity of Filmer renders his discomfiture not difficult. Locke, as will be seen, acknowledges a certain *de facto* authority in fathers of families; and possibly he might have found, as indeed he seems to admit, considerable traces of a regard to primogeniture in the early ages of the world. It is the question of natural right which he is here concerned; and, as no proof of this had been offered, he had nothing to answer.

87. In the second part of Locke's Treatise on Civil Government, he proceeds to lay down what he holds to be the true principles upon which society is founded. A state of nature is a state of perfect freedom and equality, but within the bounds of the law of nature, which obliges every one, and renders a state of liberty no state of license. And the execution of this law, in such a state, is put into every one's hands, so that he may punish transgressors against it, not merely by way of reparation for his own wrongs, but for those of others. "Every offence that can be committed in the state of nature, may, in the state of nature, be punished equally, and as far forth, as it may in a commonwealth." And not only independent communities, but all men, as he thinks, till they voluntarily enter into some society, are in a state of nature.<sup>1</sup>

88. Whoever declares by word or action a settled design against another's life, puts himself in a state of war against him, and exposes his own life to be taken away, either by the other party, or by any one who shall espouse his cause; and he who endeavors to obtain absolute power over another may be construed to have a design on his life, or at least to take away his property. Where laws prevail, they must determine

<sup>1</sup> L. H. c. 2.

the punishment of those who injure others; but, if the law is silenced, it is hard to think but that the appeal to Heaven returns, and the aggressor may be treated as one in a state of war.<sup>1</sup>

89. Natural liberty is freedom from any superior power except the law of nature. Civil liberty is freedom from the dominion of any authority except that which a legislature, established by consent of the commonwealth, shall confirm. No man, according to Locke, can by his own consent enslave himself, or give power to another to take away his life; for slavery, in a strict sense, is but a continuance of the state of war between a conqueror and his captive.<sup>2</sup>

90. The excellent chapter on property which follows would be sufficient, if all Locke's other writings had perished, to leave him a high name in philosophy. Nothing can be more luminous than his deduction of the natural right of property from labor, not merely in gathering the fruits of the earth or catching wild animals, but in the cultivation of land, for which occupancy is but the preliminary, and gives, as it were, an inchoate title. "As much land as a man tills, plants, improves, cultivates, and can use the product of, so much is his property. He by his labor does, as it were, enclose it from the common." Whatever is beyond the scanty limits of individual or family labor has been appropriated under the authority of civil society. But labor is the primary basis of natural right. Nor can it be thought unreasonable that labor should confer an exclusive right, when it is remembered how much of every thing's value depends upon labor alone. "Whatever bread is more worth than acorns, wine than water, and cloth or silk than leaves, skins, or moss, that is wholly owing to labor and industry." The superiority in good sense and satisfactory elucidation of his principle, which Locke has manifested in this important chapter over Grotius and Puffendorf, will strike those who consult those writers, or look at the brief sketch of their theories in the foregoing pages. It is no less contrasted with the puerile rant of Rousseau against all territorial property. That property owes its origin to occupancy accompanied with labor, is now generally admitted: the care of cattle being, of course, to be considered as one species of labor, and requiring at least a temporary ownership of the soil.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. 2.

C. 1.

C. 2.

91. Locke, after acutely remarking that the common arguments for the power of a father over his children would extend equally to the mother, so that it should be called parental power, reverts to the train of reasoning in the first book of this treatise against the regal authority of fathers. What they possess is not derived from generation, but from the care they necessarily take of the infant child, and during his minority: the power then terminates, though reverence, support, and even compliance, are still due. Children are also held in subordination to their parents by the institutions of property, which commonly make them dependent both as to maintenance and succession. But Locke, which is worthy to be remarked, inclines to derive the origin of civil government from the patriarchal authority; one not strictly coercive, yet voluntarily conceded by habit and family consent. "Thus the natural fathers of families, by an insensible change, became the politic monarchs of them too; and as they chanced to live long, and leave worthy and able heirs for several successions or otherwise, so they laid the foundations of hereditary or elective kingdoms."<sup>1</sup>

92. The necessity that man should not live alone produced the primary society of husband and wife, parent and children; to which that of master and servant was early added, whether of freemen engaging their service for hire, or of slaves taken in just war, who are by the right of nature subject to the absolute dominion of the captor. Such a family may sometimes resemble a little commonwealth by its numbers, but is essentially distinct from one, because its chief has no imperial power of life and death except over his slaves; nature having given him none over his children, though all men have a right to punish breaches of the law of nature in others according to the offence. But this natural power they quit, and resign into the hands of the community, when civil society is instituted; and it is in this union of the several rights of its members that the legislative right of the commonwealth consists, whether this be done by general consent at the first formation of government, or by the adhesion which any individual may give to one already established. By either of these ways, men pass from a state of nature to one of political society; the magistrate having now that power to redress injuries which had previously been each man's right. Hence

<sup>1</sup> C. 6.

absolute monarchy, in Locke's opinion, is no form of civil government; for, there being no common authority to appeal to, the sovereign is still in a state of nature with regard to his subjects.<sup>1</sup>

93. A community is formed by the unanimous consent of any body of men; but, when thus become one body, the determination of the majority must bind the rest, else it would not be one. Unanimity, after a community is once formed, can no longer be required; but this consent of men to form a civil society is that which alone did or could give beginning to any lawful government in the world. It is idle to object, that we have no records of such an event; for few commonwealths preserve the tradition of their own infancy; and whatever we do know of the origin of particular states gives indications of this mode of union. Yet he again inclines to deduce the usual origin of civil societies from imitation of patriarchal authority, which, having been recognized by each family in the arbitration of disputes and even punishment of offences, was transferred with more readiness to some one person, as the father and representative head of the infant community. He even admits that this authority might tacitly devolve upon the eldest son. Thus the first governments were monarchies, and those with no express limitations of power, till exposure of its abuse gave occasion to social laws or to co-ordinate authority. In all this he follows Hooker, from the first book of whose Ecclesiastical Polity he quotes largely in his notes.<sup>2</sup>

94. A difficulty commonly raised against the theory of compact is, that, all men being born under some government, they cannot be at liberty to erect a new one, or even to make choice whether they will obey or no. This objection Locke does not meet, like Hooker and the jurists, by supposing the agreement of a distant ancestor to oblige all his posterity: but, explicitly acknowledging that nothing can bind freemen to obey any government save their own consent, he rests the evidence of a tacit consent on the enjoyment of land, or even on mere residence within the dominions of the community; every man being at liberty to relinquish his possessions, or change his residence, and either incorporate himself with another commonwealth, or, if he can find an opportunity, set up for himself in some unoccupied part of the world. But



nothing can make a man irrevocably a member of one society, except his own voluntary declaration: such perhaps as the oath of allegiance, which Locke does not mention, ought to be reckoned.<sup>1</sup>

95. The majority having, in the first constitution of a state, the whole power, may retain it themselves, or delegate it to one or more persons.<sup>2</sup> And the supreme power is, in other words, the legislature, sacred and unalterable in the hands where the community have once placed it, without which no law can exist, and in which all obedience terminates. Yet this legislative authority itself is not absolute or arbitrary over the lives and fortunes of its subjects. It is the joint power of individuals surrendered to the state; but no man has power over his own life or his neighbor's property. The laws enacted by the legislature must be conformable to the will of God, or natural justice. Nor can it take any part of the subject's property without his own consent, or that of the majority. "For if any one shall claim a power to lay and levy taxes on the people by his own authority, and without such consent of the people, he thereby invades the fundamental law of property, and subverts the end of government. For what property have I in that which another may by right take, when he pleases, to himself?" Lastly, the legislative power is inalienable: being but delegated from the people, it cannot be transferred to others.<sup>3</sup> This is the part of Locke's treatise which has been open to most objection, and which, in some measure, seems to charge with usurpation all the established governments of Europe. It has been a theory fertile of great revolutions, and perhaps pregnant with more. In some part of this chapter also, though by no means in the most practical corollaries, the language of Hooker has led onward his more hardy disciple.

96. Though the legislative power is alone supreme in the constitution, it is yet subject to the people themselves, who may alter it whenever they find that it acts against the trust reposed in it; all power given in trust for a particular end being evidently forfeited when that end is manifestly disregarded or obstructed. But, while the government subsists, the legislature is alone sovereign; though it may be the usage to call a single executive magistrate sovereign, if he has also a share in legislation. Where this is not the case, the appella-

<sup>1</sup> C. 8.<sup>2</sup> C. 10.<sup>3</sup> C. 11.

tion is plainly improper. Locke has in this chapter a remarkable passage, one perhaps of the first declarations in favor of a change in the electoral system of England. "To what gross absurdities the following of custom, when reason has left it, may lead, we may be satisfied when we see the bare name of a town, of which there remains not so much as the ruins, where scarce so much housing as a sheepcot or more inhabitants than a shepherd is to be found, send as many representatives to the grand assembly of law-makers as a whole county, numerous in people, and powerful in riches. This strangers stand amazed at, and every one must confess needs a remedy, though most think it hard to find one, because the constitution of the legislative being the original and supreme act of the society, antecedent to all positive laws in it, and depending wholly on the people, no inferior power can alter it." But Locke is less timid about a remedy, and suggests that the executive magistrate might regulate the number of representatives, not according to old custom, but reason, which is not setting up a new legislature, but restoring an old one. "Whatsoever shall be done manifestly for the good of the people and the establishing the government on its true foundation, is, and always will be, just prerogative;"<sup>1</sup> a maxim of too dangerous latitude for a constitutional monarchy.

97. Prerogative he defines to be "a power of acting according to discretion for the public good without the prescription of the law, and sometimes even against it." This, however, is not by any means a good definition in the eyes of a lawyer; and the word, being merely technical, ought not to have been employed in so partial if not so incorrect a sense. Nor is it very precise to say, that, in England, the prerogative was always largest in the hands of our wisest and best princes, not only because the fact is otherwise, but because he confounds the legal prerogative with its actual exercise. This chapter is the most loosely reasoned of any in the treatise.<sup>2</sup>

98. Conquest, in an unjust war, can give no right at all, unless robbers and pirates may acquire a right. Nor is any one bound by promises which unjust force extorts from him. If we are not strong enough to resist, we have no remedy save patience; but our children may appeal to Heaven, and repeat their appeals till they recover their ancestral right,

<sup>1</sup> C. 12.<sup>2</sup> C. 14.

which was to be governed by such a legislation as themselves approve. He that appeals to Heaven must be sure that he has right on his side, and right, too, that is worth the trouble and cost of his appeal; as he will answer at a tribunal that cannot be deceived. Even just conquest gives no further right than to reparation of injury; and the posterity of the vanquished, he seems to hold, can forfeit nothing by their parent's offence, so that they have always a right to throw off the yoke. The title of prescription, which has commonly been admitted to silence the complaints, if not to heal the wounds, of the injured, finds no favor with Locke.<sup>1</sup> But hence it seems to follow, that no state, composed, as most have been, out of the spoils of conquest, can exercise a legitimate authority over the latest posterity of those it has incorporated. Wales, for instance, has an eternal right to shake off the yoke of England; for what Locke says of consent to laws by representatives is of little weight when these must be outnumbered in the general legislature of both countries; and indeed the first question for the Cambro-Britons would be, to determine whether they would form part of such a common legislation.

99. Usurpation, which is a kind of domestic conquest, gives no more right to obedience than unjust war: it is necessary that the people should both be at liberty to consent, and have actually consented to allow and confirm a power which the constitution of their commonwealth does not recognize.<sup>2</sup> But tyranny may exist without usurpation, whenever the power reposed in any one's hands for the people's benefit is abused to their impoverishment or slavery. Force may never be opposed but to unjust and unlawful force: in any other case, it is condemned before God and man. The king's person is in some countries sacred by law; but this, as Locke thinks, does not extend to the case, where, by putting himself in a state of war with his people, he dissolves the government.<sup>3</sup> A prince dissolves the government by ruling against law, by hindering the regular assembly of the legislature, by changing the form of election, or by rendering the people subject to a foreign power. He dissolves it also by neglecting or abandoning it, so that the laws cannot be put into execution. The government is also dissolved by breach of trust in either the legislature or the prince: by the former, when it usurps an

<sup>1</sup> C. 16.<sup>2</sup> C. 17.<sup>3</sup> C. 18.

arbitrary power over the lives, liberties, and fortunes of the subject; by the latter, when he endeavors to corrupt the representatives or to influence the choice of the electors. If it be objected, that no government will be able long to subsist if the people may set up a new legislature whenever they take offence at the old one, he replies, that mankind are too slow and averse to quit their old institutions for this danger to be apprehended. Much will be endured from rulers without mutiny or murmur. Nor is any thing more likely to restrain governments than this doctrine of the right of resistance. It is as reasonable to tell men they should not defend themselves against robbers, because it may occasion disorder, as to use the same argument for passive obedience to illegal dominion. And he observes, after quoting some other writers, that Hooker alone might be enough to satisfy those who rely on him for their ecclesiastical polity.<sup>1</sup>

100. Such is, in substance, the celebrated Treatise of Locke on Civil Government, which, with the favor of political circumstances, and the authority of his name, became the creed of a numerous party at home; while, silently spreading the fibres from its root over Europe and America, it prepared the way for theories of political society, hardly bolder in their announcement, but expressed with more passionate ardor, from which the great revolutions of the last and present age have sprung. But, as we do not launch our bark upon a stormy sea, we shall merely observe, that neither the Revolution of 1688, nor the administration of William III., could have borne the test by which Locke has tried the legitimacy of government. There was certainly no appeal to the people in the former; nor would it have been convenient for the latter to have had the maxim established, that an attempt to corrupt the legislature entails a forfeiture of the intrusted power. Whether the opinion of Locke, that mankind are slow to political change, be conformable to an enlarged experience, must be judged by every one according to his reading and observation: it is at least very different from that which Hooker, to whom he defers so greatly in most of his doctrine, has uttered in the very first sentence of his Ecclesiastical Polity. For my own part, I must confess, that, in these latter chapters of Locke on Government, I see, what sometimes appears in his other writings,

Observations on this Treatise.



the influence of temporary circumstances on a mind a little too susceptible of passion and resentment, had prevented that calm and patient examination of all the bearings of this extensive subject which true philosophy requires.

101. But, whatever may be our judgment of this work, it is equally true that it opened a new era of political opinion in Europe. The earlier writings on the side of popular sovereignty, whether those of Buchanan and Languet, of the Jesuits, or of the English republicans, had been either too closely dependent on temporary circumstances, or too much bound up with odious and unsuccessful factions, to sink very deep into the hearts of mankind. Their adversaries, with the countenance of every government on their side, kept possession of the field; and no later jurist nor theologian nor philosopher on the Continent, while they generally followed their predecessors in deriving the origin of civil society from compact, ventured to moot the delicate problem of resistance to tyranny, or of the right to reform a constitution, except in the most cautious and indefinite language. We have seen this already in Grotius and Puffendorf. But the success of the English Revolution, the necessity which the powers allied against France found of maintaining the title of William, the peculiar interest of Holland and Hanover (states at that time very strong in the literary world) in our new scheme of government, gave a weight and authority to principles, which, without some such application, it might still have been thought seditious to propound. Locke too, long an exile in Holland, was intimate with Le Clerc, who exerted a considerable influence over the Protestant part of Europe. Barbeyrac, some time afterwards, trod nearly in the same steps, and, without going all the lengths of Locke, did not fail to take a very different tone from the two older writers upon whom he has commented.

102. It was very natural, that the French Protestants, among whom traditions of a turn of thinking not the most favorable to kings may have been preserved, should, in the hour of severe persecution, mutiny in words and writings against the despotism that oppressed them. Such, it appears, had been the language of those exiles, as it is of all exiles, when an anonymous tract, entitled *Avis aux Réfugiéz*, was published with the date of Amsterdam, in 1690. This, under pretext of giving advice, in the event of

*Avis aux  
Réfugiéz,  
perhaps by  
Bayle.*

their being permitted to return home, that they should get rid of their spirit of satire and of their republican theories, is a bitter and able attack on those who had taken refuge in Holland. It asserts the principle of passive obedience; extolling also the king of France and his government, and censuring the English Revolution. Public rumor ascribed this to Bayle: it has usually passed for his, and is even inserted in the collection of his miscellaneous works. Some, however, have ascribed it to Pelisson, and others to Larroque; one already, and the other soon after, proselytes to the Church of Rome. Basnage thought it written by the latter, and published by Bayle, to whom he ascribed the preface. This is apparently in a totally opposite strain, but not without strong suspicion of irony or ill faith. The style and manner of the whole appear to suggest Bayle; and, though the supposition is very discreditable to his memory, the weight of presumption seems much to incline that way.

103. The separation of political economy from the general science which regards the well-being of communi- Political ties was not so strictly made by the earlier philoso- economists. phers as in modern times. It does not follow that national wealth engaged none of their attention. Few, on the contrary, of those who have taken comprehensive views, could have failed to regard it. In Bodin, Botero, Bacon, Hobbes, Puffendorf, we have already seen proofs of this. These may be said to have discussed the subject, not systematically, nor always with thorough knowledge, but with acuteness and in a philosophical tone. Others there were of a more limited range, whose habits of life and experience led them to particular departments of economical inquiry, especially as to commerce, the precious metals, and the laws affecting them. The Italians led the way: Serra has been mentioned in the last period, and a few more might find a place in this. De Witt's Interest of Holland can hardly be reckoned among economical writings; and it is said by Morhof, that the Dutch were not fond of promulgating their commercial knowledge:<sup>1</sup> little, at least, was contributed from that country, even at a later period, towards the theory of becoming rich. But England now took a large share in this new literature. Free, inquisitive, thriving rapidly in commerce, so that her progress even in the nineteenth century has hardly been in a greater ratio than

<sup>1</sup> Polyhistor, part III. lib. III. § 2.

before and after the middle of the seventeenth, if we may trust the statements of contemporaries, she produced some writers, who, though few of them merit the name of philosophers, yet may not here be overlooked, on account of their influence, their reputation, or their position as links in the chain of science.

104. The first of these was Thomas Mun, an intelligent merchant in the earlier part of the century, whose posthumous treatise, *England's Treasure by Foreign Trade*, was published in 1664, but seems to have been written soon after the accession of Charles I.<sup>1</sup> Mun is generally reckoned the founder of what has been called the mercantile system. His main position is, that "the ordinary means to increase our wealth and treasure is by foreign trade, wherein we must ever observe this rule, to sell more to strangers yearly than we consume of theirs in value."<sup>2</sup> We must therefore sell as cheap as possible: it was by underselling the Venetians of late years, that we had exported a great deal of cloth to Turkey.<sup>3</sup> It is singular that Mun should not have perceived the difficulty of selling very cheap the productions of a country's labor, whose gold and silver were in great abundance. He was, however, too good a merchant not to acknowledge the inefficacy and impolicy of restraining by law the exportation of coin, which is often a means of increasing our treasure in the long-run; advising instead a due regard to the balance of trade, or general surplus of exported goods, by which we shall infallibly obtain a stock of gold and silver. These notions have long since been covered with ridicule; and it is plain, that, in a merely economical view, they must always be delusive. Mun, however, looked to the accumulation of a portion of this imported treasure by the state; a resource in critical emergencies which we have now learned to despise since others have been at hand, but which in reality had made a great difference in the events of war, and changed the balance of power between many commonwealths.

Mun was followed, about 1670, by Sir Josiah Child, in a discourse on *Trade*, written on the same principles of the mercantile system, but more copious and varied. The chief aim of Child is to effect a reduction of the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. McCulloch says (Introductory Discourse to Smith's *Wealth of Nations*) it had most probably been written about 1635 or 1640. I remarked some things which serve to carry it up a little higher.

<sup>2</sup> P. 11 (edit. 1664).

<sup>3</sup> P. 12.

legal interest of money from six to four per cent, drawing an erroneous inference from the increase of wealth which had followed similar enactments.

105. Among the many difficulties with which the government of William III. had to contend, one of the most embarrassing was the scarcity of the precious metals and depreciated condition of the coin. Locke on the Coin. This opened the whole field of controversy in that province of political economy; and the bold spirit of inquiry, unshackled by prejudice in favor of ancient custom, which in all respects was characteristic of that age, began to work by reasonings on general theorems, instead of collecting insulated and inconclusive details. Locke stood forward on this, as on so many subjects, with his masculine sense and habitual closeness of thinking. His *Considerations of the Consequences of lowering Interest, and raising the Value of Money*, were published in 1691. Two further treatises are in answer to the pamphlets of Lowndes. These economical writings of Locke are not in all points conformable to the modern principles of the science. He seems to incline rather too much towards the mercantile theory, and to lay too much stress on the possession of the precious metals. From his excellent sense, however, as well as from some expressions, I should conceive that he only considers them, as they doubtless are, a portion of the exchangeable wealth of the nation, and by their inconsumable nature, as well as by the constancy of the demand for them, one of the most important. "Riches do not consist," he says, "in having more gold and silver, but in having more in proportion than the rest of the world or than our neighbors, whereby we are enabled to procure to ourselves a greater plenty of the conveniences of life."

106. Locke had the sagacity to perceive the impossibility of regulating the interest of money by law. It was an empirical proposition at that time, as we have just seen, of Sir Josiah Child, to render loans more easy to the borrower by reducing the legal rate to four per cent. The whole drift of his reasoning is against any limitation, though, from fear of appearing too paradoxical, he does not arrive at that inference. For the reasons he gives in favor of a legal limit of interest, namely, that courts of law may have some rule when nothing is stipulated in the contract, and that lenders in the metropolis may not have the same



loans in England, are, especially the first, so trifling, that he could not have relied upon them; and indeed he admits, that, in other circumstances, there would be no danger from the second. But, his prudence having restrained him from speaking out, a famous writer almost a century afterwards came forward to assert a paradox, which he loved the better for seeming such, and finally to convince the thinking part of mankind.

107. Laws fixing the value of silver, Locke perceived to be nugatory, and is averse to prohibiting its exportation. The value of money, he maintains, does not depend on the rate of interest, but on its plenty relatively to commodities. Hence the rate of interest, he thinks, but perhaps erroneously, does not govern the price of land; arguing from the higher rate of land relatively to money, that is, the worse interest it gave, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, than in his own time. But one of Locke's positions, if generally received, would alone have sufficed to lower the value of land. "It is in vain," he says, "in a country whose great fund is land, to hope to lay the public charges of the government on any thing else: there at last it will terminate." The legislature soon proceeded to act on this mistaken theory in the annual land-tax; an impost of tremendous severity at that time, the gross unfairness, however, of which has been compensated in later times by the taxes on personal succession.

108. In such a monetary crisis as that of his time, Locke was naturally obliged to consider the usual resource of raising the denomination of the coin. This, he truly says, would be to rob all creditors of such a proportion of their debts. It is probable that his influence, which was very considerable, may have put a stop to the scheme. He contends in his *Further Considerations*, in answer to a tract by Lowndes, that clipped money should go only by weight. This seems to have been agreed by both parties; but Lowndes thought the loss should be defrayed by a tax, Locke that it should fall on the holders. Honorably for the government, the former opinion prevailed.

109. The Italians were the first who laid any thing like a *Statistical tracts.* foundation for statistics or political arithmetic; that which is to the political economist what general history is to the philosopher. But their numerical reckonings of population, houses, value of lands or stock, and the like, though very curious, and sometimes taken from public docu-

ments, were not always more than conjectural, nor are they so full and minute as the spirit of calculation demands. England here again took the lead in Graunt's *Observations on the Bills of Mortality*, 1661, in Petty's *Political Arithmetic* (posthumous in 1691), and other treatises of the same ingenious and philosophical person, and, we may add, in the *Observations of Gregory King on the Natural and Political State of England*; for, though these were not published till near the end of the eighteenth century, the manuscripts had fallen into the hands of Dr. Charles Davenant, who has made extracts from them in his own valuable contributions to political arithmetic. King seems to have possessed a sagacity which has sometimes brought his conjectures nearer to the mark, than, from the imperfection of his data, it was reasonable to expect. Yet he supposes that the population of England, which he estimated, perhaps rightly, at five millions and a half, would not reach the double of that number before A.D. 2300. Sir William Petty, with a mind capable of just and novel theories, was struck by the necessary consequences of an uniformly progressive population. Though the rate of movement seemed to him, as in truth it then was, much slower than we have latterly found it, he clearly saw that its continuance would in an ascertainable length of time overload the world; "and then," according to the prediction of the Scriptures, "there must be wars and great slaughter." He conceived that, in the ordinary course of things, the population of a country would be doubled in two hundred years; but the whole conditions of the problem were far less understood than at present. Davenant's *Essay on Ways and Means*, 1693, gained him a high reputation, which he endeavored to augment by many subsequent works; some falling within the seventeenth century. He was a man of more enlarged reading than his predecessors, with the exception of Petty, and of close attention to the statistical documents which were now more copiously published than before; but he seldom launches into any extensive theory, confining himself rather to the accumulation of facts, and to the immediate inferences, generally for temporary purposes, which they supplied.

## SECT. III.—ON JURISPRUDENCE.

110. IN 1667, a short book was published at Frankfort, by a young man of twenty-two years, entitled *Methodi Novæ Dīcendæ Docendæque Jurisprudentiæ*. The science which of all others had been deemed to require the most protracted labor, the ripest judgment, the most experienced discrimination, was, as it were, invaded by a boy, but by one who had the genius of an Alexander, and for whom the glories of an Alexander were reserved. This is the first production of Leibnitz; and it is probably in many points of view the most remarkable work that has prematurely united erudition and solidity. We admire in it the vast range of learning (for, though he could not have read all the books he names, there is evidence of his acquaintance with a great number, and at least with a well-filled chart of literature), the originality of some ideas, the commanding and comprehensive views he embraces, the philosophical spirit, the compressed style in which it is written, the entire absence of juvenility, of ostentatious paradox,<sup>1</sup> of imagination, ardor, and enthusiasm, which, though Leibnitz did not always want them, would have been wholly misplaced on such a subject. Faults have been censured in this early performance: and the author declared himself afterwards dissatisfied with it.<sup>2</sup>

111. Leibnitz was a passionate admirer of the Roman jurisprudence: he held the great lawyers of antiquity second only to the best geometers for strong and subtle and profound reasoning; not even acknowledging, to any considerable degree, the contradictions (*antinomice juris*) which had per-

<sup>1</sup> I use the epithet "ostentatious," because some of his original theories are a little paradoxical; thus he has a singular notion that the right of bequeathing property by testament is derived from the immortality of the soul; the living heirs being, as it were, the attorneys of those we supposed to be dead. "Quia mortui caverant alibi vivunt, ibi manent domini rerum, quos vero heredes reliquerunt, conspiciendi sunt ut procuratores in rem suam." In our own discussions on the law of entail, I am not aware that this argument has ever been explicitly urged, though the advocates of perpetual control seem to have none better.

<sup>2</sup> This tract, and all the other works of Leibnitz on Jurisprudence, will be found in the fourth volume of his works by Diction. An analysis by Ron, professor of law at Turin, is prefixed to the *Methodi Novæ*; and he has pointed out a few errors. Leibnitz says in a letter about 1676, that his book was "effusus potius quam scriptus, in itinere, sine libris," &c.; and that it contained some things he no longer would have said, though there were others of which he did not repent. Larrozier, *Hist. du Droit*, p. 150.

plexed their disciples in later times, and on which many volumes had been written. But the arrangement of Justinian he entirely disapproved; and in another work, *Corporis Juris Reconcinnandi Ratio*, published in 1668, he pointed out the necessity and what he deemed the best method of a new distribution. This appears to be not quite like what he had previously sketched, and which was rather a philosophical than a very convenient method:<sup>1</sup> in this new arrangement he proposes to retain the texts of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, but in a form rather like that of the *Pandects* than of the *Institutes*; to the latter of which, followed as it has been among us by Hale and Blackstone, he was very averse.

112. There was only one man in the world who could have left so noble a science as philosophical jurisprudence for pursuits of a still more exalted nature, and for which he was still more fitted; and that man was Leibnitz himself. He passed onward to reap the golden harvests of other fields. Yet the study of law has owed much to him: he did much to unite it with moral philosophy on the one hand, and with history on the other; a great master of both, he exacted perhaps a more comprehensive course of legal studies than the capacity of ordinary lawyers could grasp. In England also, its conduciveness to professional excellence might be hard to prove. It is, however, certain that, in Germany at least, philology, history, and philosophy have more or less, since the time of Leibnitz, marched together under the robe of law. "He did but pass over that kingdom," says Lermiuier, "and he has reformed and enlarged it."<sup>2</sup>

113. James Godefroy was thirty years engaged on an edition of the Theodosian Code, published several years after his death, in 1665. It is by far the best edition of that body of laws, and retains a standard value in the historical department of jurisprudence. Domat, a French lawyer, and one of the Port-Royal connection, in his *Loix Civiles dans leur Ordre Naturel*, the first of five volumes of which appeared in 1689, carried into effect the project of Leibnitz, by re-arranging the laws of Justinian, which, especially the *Pandects*, are well known to be confu-

Civil  
Jurists;  
Godefroy;  
Domat.

<sup>1</sup> In his *Methodi Novæ*, he divides law, in the didactic part, according to the several sources of rights: namely, 1. Nature, which gives us right over *res nullius*, things where there is no prior property;

2. Succession; 3. Possession; 4. Contract; 5. Injury, which gives right to reparation.

<sup>2</sup> *Diogr. Univ.*; Lermiuier, *Hist. du Droit*, p. 142.



sedly distributed, in a more regular method; prefixing a book of his own on the nature and spirit of law in general. This appears to be an useful digest or abridgment, something like those made by Viner and earlier writers of our own text-books, but perhaps with more compression and choice: two editions of an English translation were published. Domat's Public Law, which might, perhaps, in our language, have been called constitutional, since we generally confine the epithet "public" to the law of nations, forms a second part of the same work, and contains a more extensive system, wherein theological morality, ecclesiastical ordinances, and the fundamental laws of the French monarchy, are reduced into method. Domat is much extolled by his countrymen; but, in philosophical jurisprudence, he seems to display little force or originality. Gravina, who obtained a high name in this literature at the beginning of the next century, was known merely as a professor at the close of this; but a Dutch jurist,

Noodt on Usury. Gerard Noodt, may deserve mention for his treatise on Usury, in 1698, wherein he both endeavors to prove its natural and religious lawfulness, and traces its history through the Roman law. Several other works of Noodt on subjects of historical jurisprudence seem to fall within this century, though I do not find their exact dates of publication.

114. Grotius was the acknowledged master of all who studied the theory of international right. It was, perhaps, the design of Puffendorf, as we may conjecture by the title of his great work on the Law of Nature and Nations, to range over the latter field with as assiduous diligence as the former. But, from the length of his prolix labor on natural law and the rights of sovereigns, he has not more than one-twentieth of the whole volume to spare for international questions; and this is in great measure copied or abridged from Grotius. In some instances he disagrees with his master. Puffendorf singularly denies, that compacts made during war are binding by the law of nature, but for weak and unintelligible reasons.<sup>1</sup> Treaties of peace extorted by unjust force, he denies with more reason to be binding; though Grotius had held the contrary.<sup>2</sup> The inferior writers on the law of nations, or those who, like Wicquefort, in his Ambassador, confined themselves to merely conventional usages, it is needless to mention.

<sup>1</sup> B. viii. chap. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. 8.

## CHAPTER V.

## HISTORY OF POETRY FROM 1650 TO 1700.

## SECT. I. — ON ITALIAN POETRY.

Filicaja — Gualdi — Mendini — Arcadian Society.

1. THE imitators of Marini, full of extravagant metaphors, and the false thoughts usually called *concelli*, were in their vigor at the commencement of this period. But their names are now obscure, and have been overwhelmed by the change of public taste, which has condemned and proscribed what it once most applauded. This change came on long before the close of the century, though not so decidedly but that some traces of the former manner are discoverable in the majority of popular writers. The general characteristics, however, of Italian poetry were now a more masculine tone; a wider reach of topics, and a selection of the most noble; an abandonment, except in the lighter lyrics, of amatory strains, and especially of such as were languishing and querulous; an anticipation, in short, as far as the circumstances of the age would permit, of that severe and elevated style which has been most affected for the last fifty years. It would be futile to seek an explanation of this manlier spirit in any social or political causes; never had Italy in these respects been so lifeless: but the world of poets is often not the world around them, and their stream of living waters may flow, like that of Arethusa, without imbibing much from the surrounding brine. Chiabrera had led the way by the Pindaric majesty of his odes, and had disciples of at least equal name with himself.

2. Florence was the mother of one who did most to invigorate Italian poetry, Vincenzo Filicaja; a man gifted with a serious, pure, and noble spirit, from which congenial thoughts spontaneously arose, and with an imagination

Improved  
tone of  
Italian  
poetry.

Filicaja.

rather vigorous than fertile. The siege of Vienna in 1683, and its glorious deliverance by Sobieski, are the subjects of six odes. The third of these addressed to the King of Poland himself, is generally most esteemed, though I do not perceive that the first or second are inferior. His ode to Rome, on Christina's taking up her residence there, is in many parts highly poetical; but the flattery of representing this event as sufficient to restore the eternal city from decay is too gross. It is not, on the whole, so successful as those on the siege of Vienna. A better is that addressed to Florence, on leaving it for a rural solitude, in consequence of his poverty and the neglect he had experienced. It breathes an injured spirit, something like the Complaint of Cowley, with which posterity are sure to sympathize. The sonnet of Filicaja, *Italia mia*, is known by every one who cares for this poetry at all. This sonnet is conspicuous for its depth of feeling, for the spirit of its commencement, and, above all, for the noble lines with which it ends; but there are surely awkward and feeble expressions in the intermediate part. *Armenti* for regiments of dragoons could only be excused by frequent usage in poetry, which, I presume, is not the case, though we find the same word in one of Filicaja's odes. A foreigner may venture upon this kind of criticism.

3. Filicaja was formed in the school of Chiabrera; but, with his pomp of sound and boldness of imagery, he is animated by a deeper sense both of religion and patriotism. We perceive more the language of the heart: the man speaks in his genuine character, not with assumed and mercenary sensibility, like that of Pindar and Chiabrera. His genius is greater than his skill: he abandons himself to an impetuosity which he cannot sustain, forgetful of the economy of strength and breath, as necessary for a poet as a race-horse. He has rarely or never any conceits or frivolous thoughts; but the expression is sometimes rather feeble. There is a general want of sunshine in Filicaja's poetry; unprosperous himself, he views nothing with a worldly eye; his notes of triumph are without brilliancy, his predictions of success are without joy. He seems also deficient in the charms of grace and felicity. But his poetry is always the effusion of a fine soul: we venerate and love Filicaja as a man, but we also acknowledge that he was a real poet.

4. Guidi, a native of Pavia, raised himself to the highest

point that any lyric poet of Italy has attained. His odes are written at Rome from about the year 1685 to the end of the century. Compared with Chiabrera, or even

Guidi.

Filicaja, he may be allowed the superiority: if he never rises to a higher pitch than the latter, if he has never chosen subjects so animating, if he has never displayed so much depth and truth of feeling, his enthusiasm is more constant, his imagination more creative, his power of language more extensive and more felicitous. "He falls sometimes," says Corniani, "into extravagance, but never into affectation. . . . His peculiar excellence is poetical expression, always brilliant with a light of his own. The magic of his language used to excite a lively movement among the hearers when he recited his verses in the Arcadian Society." Corniani adds, that he is sometimes exuberant in words and hyperbolical in images.<sup>1</sup>

5. The ode of Guidi on Fortune appears to me at least equal to any in the Italian language. If it has been suggested by that of Celio Magno, entitled Iddio, the resemblance does not deserve the name of imitation: a nobleness of thought, imagery, and language, prevails throughout. But this is the character of all his odes. He chose better subjects than Chiabrera; for the ruins of Rome are more glorious than the living house of Medici. He resembles him, indeed, rather than any other poet, so that it might not always be easy to discern one from the other in a single stanza: but Guidi is bolder, a more imaginative, a more enthusiastic poet. Both adorn and amplify a little to excess; and it may be imputed to Guidi, that he has abused an advantage which his native language afforded. The Italian is rich in words, where the sound so well answers to the meaning, that it is hardly possible to hear them without an associated sentiment: their effect is closely analogous to musical expression. Such are the adjectives denoting mental elevation, as *superbo*, *altiero*, *audace*, *gayliardo*, *indomito*, *maestoso*. These recur in the poems of Guidi with every noun that will admit of them; but sometimes the artifice is a little too transparent, and, though the meaning is not sacrificed to sound, we feel that it is too much enveloped in it, and are not quite pleased that a great poet should rely so much on a resource which the most mechanical slave of music can employ.

6. The odes of Benedetto Menzini are elegant and in poeti-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. viii. p. 224



cal language, but such as does not seem very original; nor do they strike us by much vigor or animation of thought.

Menzini. The allusions to mythology, which we never find in Filicaja, and rarely in Guidi, are too frequent. Some of these odes are of considerable beauty; among which we may distinguish that addressed to Magalotti, beginning, "Un verde ramuscello in piaggia aprica." Menzini was far from confining himself to this species of poetry: he was better known in others. As an Anacreontic poet, he stands, I believe, only below Chiabrera and Redi. His satires have been preferred by some to those of Ariosto; but neither Corniani nor Sali acquiesce in this praise. Their style is a mixture of obsolete phrases from Dante with the idioms of the Florentine populace; and, though spirited in substance, they are rather full of commonplace invective. Menzini strikes boldly at priests and governments, and, what was dangerous to Orpheus, at the whole sex of women. His Art of Poetry, in five books, published in 1681, deserves some praise. As his atrabilious humor prompted, he inveighs against the corruption of contemporary literature, especially on the stage; ridiculing also the Pindaric pomp that some affected, not perhaps without allusion to his enemy Guidi. His own style is pointed, animated, sometimes poetical, where didactic verse will admit of such ornament, but a little too diffuse and minute in criticism.

7. These three are the great restorers of Italian poetry after the usurpation of false taste. And it is to be observed that they introduced a new manner, very different from that of the sixteenth century. Several others deserve to be mentioned, though we can only do so briefly. The Satires of Salvator Rosa, full of force and vehemence, more vigorous than elegant, are such as his ardent genius and rather savage temper would lead us to expect. A far superior poet was a man not less eminent than Salvator, — the philosophical and every way accomplished Redi. Few have done so much in any part of science who have also shone so brightly in the walks of taste. The sonnets of Redi are esteemed; but his famous dithyrambic, *Bacco in Toscana*, is admitted to be the first poem of that kind in modern language, and is as worthy of Monte Pulciano wine as the wine is worthy of it.

8. Muggi and Lemene bore an honorable part in the restoration of poetry, though neither of them is reckoned altogether

to have purified himself from the infection of the preceding age. The sonnet of Pastorini on the imagined resistance of Genoa to the oppression of Louis XIV. in 1684, though not borne out by historical truth, is one of those breathings of Italian nationality which we always admire, and which had now become more common than for a century before. It must be confessed, in general, that, when the protestations of a people against tyranny become loud enough to be heard, we may suspect that the tyranny has been relaxed.

9. Rome was to poetry in this age what Florence had once been, though Rome had hitherto done less for the Italian muses than any other great city. Nor was this so much due to her bishops and cardinals, as to a stranger and a woman. Christina finally took up her abode there in 1688. Her palace became the resort of all the learning and genius she could assemble around her: a literary academy was established, and her revenue was liberally dispensed in pensions. If Filicaja and Guidi, both sharers of her bounty, have exaggerated her praises, much may be pardoned to gratitude, and much also to the natural admiration which those who look up to power must feel for those who have renounced it. Christina died in 1690, and her own academy could last no longer; but a phoenix sprang at once from its ashes. Crescimbeni, then young, has the credit of having planned the Society of Arcadians, which began in 1690, and has eclipsed in celebrity most of the earlier academies of Italy. Fourteen, says Corniani, were the original founders of this society; among whom were Crescimbeni and Gravina and Zappi. In course of time, the Arcadians vastly increased, and established colonies in the chief cities of Italy. They determined to assume every one a pastoral name and a Greek birthplace, to hold their meetings in some verdant meadow, and to mingle with all their compositions, as far as possible, images from pastoral life,—images always agreeable, because they recall the times of primitive innocence. This poetical tribe adopted as their device the pipe of seven reeds bound with laurel; and their president or director was denominated general shepherd or keeper (*custode generale*).<sup>1</sup> The fantastical part of the Arcadian Society was common to them with all similar institutions; and mankind has generally

Other poets.

Christina's patronage of letters.

Society of Arcadians.

<sup>1</sup> Corniani, viii. 301; Tiraboschi, xi. 48; Crescimbeni, Storia d'Arcadia (reprinted by Mathias).

required some ceremonial follies to keep alive the wholesome spirit of association. Their solid aim was to purify the national taste. Much had been already done, and in great measure by their own members, Menzini and Guidi; but their influence, which was of course more felt in the next century, has always been reckoned both important and auspicious to Italian literature.

## SECT. II. — ON FRENCH POETRY.

*La Fontaine — Boileau — Minor French Poets.*

10. We must pass over Spain and Portugal as absolutely destitute of any name which requires commemoration. In France it was very different: if some earlier periods had been not less rich in the number of versifiers, none had produced poets who have descended with so much renown to posterity. The most popular of these was La Fontaine. Few writers have left such a number of verses which, in the phrase of his country, have made their fortune, and been, like ready money, always at hand for prompt quotation. His lines have at once a proverbial truth and a humor of expression which render them constantly applicable. This is chiefly true of his Fables; for his Tales, though no one will deny that they are lively enough, are not reckoned so well written, nor do they supply so much for general use.

11. The models of La Fontaine's style were partly the ancient fabulists whom he copied, for he pretends to no originality; partly the old French poets, especially Marot. From the one he took the real gold of his fables themselves; from the other he caught a peculiar archness and vivacity, which some of them had possessed, perhaps, in no less degree, but which becomes more captivating from his intermixture of a solid and serious wisdom. For, notwithstanding the common anecdotes (sometimes, as we may suspect, rather exaggerated) of La Fontaine's simplicity, he was evidently a man who had thought and observed much about human nature, and knew a little more of the world than he cared to let the world perceive. Many of his fables are

*Character  
of his  
Fables.*

admirable: the grace of the poetry, the happy inspiration that seems to have dictated the turns of expression, place him in the first rank among fabulists. Yet the praise of La Fontaine should not be indiscriminate. It is said that he gave the preference to Phædrus and Æsop above himself; and some have thought, that in this he could not have been sincere. It was at least a proof of his modesty. But though we cannot think of putting Phædrus on a level with La Fontaine, were it only for this reason, that, in a work designed for the general reader (and surely fables are of this description), the qualities that please the many are to be valued above those that please the few, yet it is true that the French poet might envy some talents of the Roman. Phædrus, a writer scarcely prized enough, because he is an early school-book, has a perfection of elegant beauty which very few have rivalled. No word is out of its place; none is redundant, or could be changed for a better: his perspicuity and ease make every thing appear unpremeditated, yet every thing is wrought by consummate art. In many fables of La Fontaine, this is not the case: he beats round the subject, and misses often before he hits. Much, whatever La Harpe may assert to the contrary, could be retrenched: in much the exigencies of rhyme and metre are too manifest.<sup>1</sup> He has, on the other hand, far more humor than Phædrus; and, whether it be praise or not, thinks less of his fable, and more of its moral. One pleases by enlivening; the other pleases, but does not enliven: one has more felicity, the other more skill; but in such skill there is felicity.

12. The first seven satires of Boileau appeared in 1666; and these, though much inferior to his later produc-  
 tions, are characterized by La Harpe as the earliest  
 poetry in the French language where the mechanism of its  
 verse was fully understood, where the style was always pure

<sup>1</sup> Let us take, for example, the first lines of *L'Homme et la Conscience*:—

"Un homme vit une conscience.  
 Ah méchante, dit-il, je m'en vais faire un  
 oeuvre

Agreeable à tout l'univers!  
 A ces mots l'animal pervers  
 (C'est le serpent que je veux dire,  
 Et non l'homme, on pourroit aisément s'y  
 tromper)

A ces mots le serpent se lève et attrape  
 Est pris, mis en un sac; et, ce qui fut le pire,  
 On résolut sa mort, fut-il coupable ou non."

None of these lines appear to me very happy; but there can be no doubt about that in *Italics*, which spoils the effect of the preceding, and is feebly redundant. The last words are almost equally bad: no question could arise about the serpent's guilt, which had been assumed before. But these petty blemishes are abundantly redeemed by the rest of the fable, which is beautiful in choice of thoughts and language, and may be classed with the best in the collection.



and elegant, where the ear was uniformly gratified. The Art of Poetry was published in 1673, the Lutrin in 1674: the Epistles followed at various periods. Their elaborate though equable strain, in a kind of poetry, which, never requiring high flights of fancy, escapes the censure of mediocrity and monotony which might sometimes fall upon it, generally excites more admiration in those who have been accustomed to the numerous defects of less finished poets, than it retains in a later age, when others have learned to emulate and preserve the same uniformity. The fame of Pope was transcendent for this reason; and Boileau is the analogue of Pope in French literature.

13. The Art of Poetry has been the model of the Essay on Criticism: few poems more resemble each other. His Art of Poetry. I will not weigh in opposite scales two compositions, of which one claims an advantage from its having been original, the other from the youth of its author. Both are uncommon efforts of critical good sense; and both are distinguished by their short and pointed language, which remains in the memory. Boileau has very well incorporated the thoughts of Horace with his own, and given them a skilful adaptation to his own times. He was a bolder critic of his contemporaries than Pope. He took up arms against those who shared the public favor, and were placed by half Paris among great dramatists and poets, — Pradon, Desmarests, Brebœuf. This was not true of the heroes of the Dunciad. His scorn was always bitter, and probably sometimes unjust; yet posterity has ratified almost all his judgments. False taste, it should be remembered, had long infected the poetry of Europe; some steps had been lately taken to repress it: but extravagance, affectation, and excess of refinement, are weeds that can only be eradicated by a thorough cleansing of the soil, by a process of burning and paring, which leaves not a seed of them in the public mind. And when we consider the gross blemishes of this description that deform the earlier poetry of France, as of other nations, we cannot blame the severity of Boileau, though he may occasionally have condemned in the mass what contained some intermixture of real excellence. We have become of late years in England so enamoured of the beauties of our old writers (and certainly they are of a superior kind), that we are sometimes more than a little blind to their faults.

14. By writing satires, epistles, and an Art of Poetry, Boileau has challenged an obvious comparison with Horace. Yet they are very unlike: one easy, colloquial, abandoning himself to every change that arises in his mind; the other uniform as a regiment under arms, always equal, always labored, incapable of a bold neglect. Poetry seems to have been the delight of one, the task of the other. The pain that Boileau must have felt in writing communicates itself in some measure to the reader; we are fearful of losing some point, of passing over some epithet without sufficiently perceiving its selection; it is as with those pictures which are to be viewed long and attentively, till our admiration of detached proofs of skill becomes wearisome by repetition.

Comparison  
with  
Horace.

15. The Lutrin is the most popular of the poems of Boileau. Its subject is ill chosen: neither interest nor variety could be given to it. Tassoni and Pope have the advantage in this respect: if their leading theme is trifling, we lose sight of it in the gay liveliness of description and episode. In Boileau, after we have once been told that the canons of a church spend their lives in sleep and eating, we have no more to learn, and grow tired of keeping company with a race so stupid and sensual. But the poignant wit and satire, the elegance and correctness of numberless couplets, as well as the ingenious adaptation of classical passages, redeem this poem, and confirm its high place in the mock-heroic line.

The Lutrin.

16. The great deficiency of Boileau is in sensibility. Far below Pope or even Dryden in this essential quality, which the moral epistle or satire not only admits, but requires, he rarely quits two paths,—those of reason and of raillery. His tone on moral subjects is firm and severe, but not very noble: a taint of pathos, a single touch of pity or tenderness, will rarely be found. This of itself serves to give a dryness to his poetry; and it may be doubtful, though most have read Boileau, whether many have read him twice.

General  
character  
of his  
poetry.

17. The pompous tone of Ronsard and Du Bartas had become ridiculous in the reign of Louis XIV. Even that of Malherbe was too elevated for the public taste: none at least imitated that writer, though the critics had set the example of admiring him. Boileau, who had done much to

turn away the world from imagination to plain sense, once attempted to emulate the grandiloquent strains of Pindar in an ode on the taking of Namur, but with no such success as could encourage himself or others to repeat the experiment. Yet there was no want of gravity or elevation in the prose writers of France, nor in the tragedies of Racine. But the French language is not very well adapted for the higher kind of lyric poetry, while it suits admirably the lighter forms of song and epigram. And their poets in this age were almost entirely men living at Paris, either in the court, or at least in a refined society, the most adverse of all to the poetical character. The influence of wit and politeness is generally directed towards rendering enthusiasm, or warmth of fancy, ridiculous; and without these no great energy of genius can be displayed. But, in their proper department, several poets of considerable merit appeared.

18. Benserade was called peculiarly the poet of the court: for twenty years it was his business to compose verses for the ballets represented before the king. His skill and tact were shown in delicate contrivances to make those who supported the characters of gods and goddesses in these fictions, being the nobles and ladies of the court, betray their real inclinations, and sometimes their gallantries. He even presumed to shadow in this manner the passion of Louis for Mademoiselle La Valière, before it was publicly acknowledged. Benserade must have had no small ingenuity and adroitness; but his verses did not survive those who called them forth. In a different school, not essentially, perhaps, much more vicious than the court, but more careless of appearances, and rather proud of an immorality which it had no interest to conceal, that of Ninon l'Enclos, several of higher reputation grew up, — Chapelle (whose real name was L'Huillier), La Fare, Bachaumont, Lainezer, and Chaulieu. The first, perhaps, and certainly the last of these, are worthy to be remembered. La Harpe has said that Chaulieu alone retains a claim to be read in a style where Voltaire has so much left all others behind, that no comparison with him can ever be admitted. Chaulieu was an original genius: his poetry has a marked character, being a happy mixture of a gentle and peaceable philosophy with a lively imagination. His verses flow from his soul, and, though often

Lyric  
poetry  
lighter  
than before.

Benserade.

Chaulieu.

negligent through indolence, are never in bad taste or affected. Harmony of versification, grace and gayety, with a voluptuous and Epicurean, but mild and benevolent, turn of thought, belong to Chaulieu; and these are qualities which do not fail to attract the majority of readers.<sup>1</sup>

19. It is rather singular that a style so uncongenial to the spirit of that age as pastoral poetry appears was <sup>Pastoral</sup> quite as much cultivated as before. But it is still <sup>poetry</sup> true, that the spirit of the age gained the victory, and drove the shepherds from their shady bowers, though without substituting any thing more rational in the fairy tales which superseded the pastoral romance. At the middle of the century and partially till near its close, the style of D'Urfé and Scudéry retained its popularity. Three poets of the age <sup>Segrais</sup> of Louis were known in pastoral: Segrais, Madame Deshoulières, and Fontenelle. The first belongs most to the genuine school of modern pastoral; he is elegant, romantic, full of complaining love; the Spanish and French romances had been his model in invention, as Virgil was in style. La Harpe allows him nature, sweetness, and sentiment; but he cannot emulate the vivid coloring of Virgil, and the language of his shepherds, though simple, wants elegance and harmony. The tone of his pastorals seems rather insipid, though La Harpe has quoted some pleasing lines. Madame <sup>Deshoulières</sup> Deshoulières, with a purer style than Segrais, according to the same critic, has less genius. Others have thought her *Idylls* the best in the language.<sup>2</sup> But these seem to be merely trivial moralities addressed to flowers, brooks, and sheep; sometimes expressed in a manner both ingenious and natural, but, on the whole, too feeble to give much pleasure. Bouterwek observes that her poetry is to be considered as that of a woman, and that its pastoral morality would be somewhat childish in the mouth of man: whether this says more for the lady, or against her sex, I must leave to the reader. She has occasionally some very pleasing and even poetical passages.<sup>3</sup> The third among these poets of the pipe is Fontenelle. But his pastorals, as Bouterwek says, <sup>Fontenelle</sup> are too artificial for the ancient school, and too cold for the romantic. La Harpe blames, besides this general fault, the negligence and prosaic phrases of his style. The

<sup>1</sup> La Harpe; Bouterwek, vi. 127; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>2</sup> Biogr. Univ.

<sup>3</sup> Bouterwek, vi. 162.



best is that entitled *Ismene*. It is, in fact, a poem for the world; yet, as love and its artifices are found everywhere, we cannot censure any passage as absolutely unfit for pastoral, save a certain refinement which belonged to the author in every thing, and which interferes with our sense of rural simplicity.

20. In the superior walks of poetry, France had nothing of which she has been inclined to boast. Chapelain, a man of some credit as a critic, produced his long-labored epic, *La Pucelle*, in 1656, which is only remembered by the insulting ridicule of Boileau. A similar fate has fallen on the *Clovis* of Desmarests, published in 1684, though the German historian of literature has extolled the richness of imagination it shows, and observed that, if those who saw nothing but a fantastic writer in Desmarests had possessed as much fancy, the national poetry would have been of a higher character.<sup>1</sup> Brebœuf's translation of the *Pharsalia* is spirited, but very extravagant.

21. The literature of Germany was now more corrupted by bad taste than ever. A second Silesian school, but much inferior to that of Opitz, was founded by Hoffmannswaldau and Lohenstein. The first had great facility, and imitated Ovid and Marini with some success. The second, with worse taste, always tumid and striving at something elevated, so that the Lohenstein swell became a byword with later critics, is superior to Hoffmannswaldau in richness of fancy, in poetical invention, and in warmth of feeling for all that is noble and great. About the end of the century arose a new style, known by the unhappy name spiritless (*geistlos*), which, avoiding the tone of Lohenstein, became wholly tame and flat.<sup>2</sup>

### SECT. III. — ON ENGLISH POETRY.

Waller — Butler — Milton — Dryden — The Minor Poets.

22. WE might have placed Waller in the former division of the seventeenth century with no more impropriety than we

<sup>1</sup> Bouterwek, vi. 167.

Id., vol. x. p. 289; Heinsius, iv. 287; Niebhorn, Geschichte der Cultur, iv. 778

might have reserved Cowley for the latter: both belong by the date of their writings to the two periods; and, perhaps, the poetry of Waller bears rather the stamp of the first Charles's age than of that which ensued. His reputation was great, and somewhat more durable than that of similar poets has generally been: he did not witness its decay in his own protracted life, nor was it much diminished at the beginning of the next century. Nor was this wholly undeserved. Waller has a more uniform elegance, a more sure facility and happiness of expression, and, above all, a greater exemption from glaring faults, such as pedantry, extravagance, conceit, quaintness, obscurity, ungrammatical and unmeaning constructions, than any of the Caroline era with whom he would naturally be compared. We have only to open Carew or Lovelace to perceive the difference; not that Waller is wholly without some of these faults, but that they are much less frequent. If others may have brighter passages of fancy or sentiment, which is not difficult, he husbands better his resources, and, though left behind in the beginning of the race, comes sooner to the goal. His Panegyric on Cromwell was celebrated. "Such a series of verses," it is said by Johnson, "had rarely appeared before in the English language. Of these lines some are grand, some are graceful, and all are musical. There is now and then a feeble verse, or a trifling thought; but its great fault is the choice of its hero." It may not be the opinion of all, that Cromwell's actions were of that obscure and pitiful character which the majesty of song rejects; and Johnson has before observed, that Waller's choice of encomiastic topics in this poem is very judicious. Yet his deficiency in poetical vigor will surely be traced in this composition; if he rarely sinks, he never rises very high; and we find much good sense and selection, much skill in the mechanism of language and metre, without ardor and without imagination. In his amorous poetry he has little passion or sensibility; but he is never free and petulant, never tedious, and never absurd. His praise consists much in negations; but, in a comparative estimate, perhaps negations ought to count for a good deal.

23. Hudibras was incomparably more popular than *Paradise Lost*: no poem in our language rose at once to greater reputation. Nor can this be called ephemeral, like that of most political poetry. For at least half a

Butler's  
Hudibras

century after its publication, it was generally read, and perpetually quoted. The wit of Butler has still preserved many lines; but *Hudibras* now attracts comparatively few readers. The eulogies of Johnson seem rather adapted to what he remembered to have been the fame of Butler than to the feelings of the surrounding generation; and since his time new sources of amusement have sprung up, and writers of a more intelligible pleasantry have superseded those of the seventeenth century. In the fiction of *Hudibras* there was never much to divert the reader, and there is still less left at present. But what has been censured as a fault, — the length of dialogue, which puts the fiction out of sight, — is in fact the source of all the pleasure that the work affords. The sense of Butler is masculine, his wit inexhaustible, and it is supplied from every source of reading and observation. But these sources are often so unknown to the reader, that the wit loses its effect through the obscurity of its allusions, and he yields to the bane of wit, a purblind mole-like pedantry. His versification is sometimes spirited, and his rhymes humorous; yet he wants that ease and flow which we require in light poetry.

24. The subject of *Paradise Lost* is the finest that has ever been chosen for heroic poetry: it is also managed by Milton with remarkable skill. The *Iliad* wants completeness: it has an unity of its own, but it is the unity of a part where we miss the relation to a whole. The *Odyssey* is not imperfect in this point of view; but the subject is hardly extensive enough for a legitimate epic. The *Æneid* is spread over too long a space: and perhaps the latter books, by the diversity of scene and subject, lose part of that intimate connection with the former which an epic poem requires. The *Pharsalia* is open to the same criticism as the *Iliad*. The *Thebaid* is not deficient in unity, or greatness of action; but it is one that possesses no sort of interest in our eyes. Tasso is far superior, both in choice and management of his subject, to most of these; yet the Fall of Man has a more general interest than the *Crusade*.

25. It must be owned, nevertheless, that a religious epic labors under some disadvantages: in proportion as it attracts those who hold the same tenets with the author, it is regarded by those who dissent from him with indifference or aversion. It is said that the discovery of Milton's Arianism, in this rigid generation, has already im-

*Paradise  
Lost:*  
choice of  
subject.

Open to  
some diffi-  
culties.

paired the sale of *Paradise Lost*. It is also difficult to enlarge or adorn such a story by fiction. Milton has done much in this way; yet he was partly restrained by the necessity of conforming to Scripture.

26. The ordonnance or composition of the *Paradise Lost* is admirable; and here we perceive the advantage <sup>its arrange-</sup> which Milton's great familiarity with the Greek <sup>ment.</sup> theatre, and his own original scheme of the poem, had given him. Every part succeeds in an order, noble, clear, and natural. It might have been wished, indeed, that the vision of the eleventh book had not been changed into the colder narrative of the twelfth. But what can be more majestic than the first two books which open this great drama? It is true that they rather serve to confirm the sneer of Dryden, that Satan is Milton's hero; since they develop a plan of action in that potentate, which is ultimately successful; the triumph that he and his host must experience in the fall of man being hardly compensated by their temporary conversion into serpents; a fiction rather too grotesque. But it is, perhaps, only pedantry to talk about the hero; as if a high personage were absolutely required in an epic poem to predominate over the rest. The conception of Satan is doubtless the first effort of Milton's genius. Dante could not have ventured to spare so much lustre for a ruined archangel, in an age when nothing less than horns and a tail were the orthodox creed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Coleridge has a fine passage which I cannot resist my desire to transcribe. "The character of Satan is pride and sensual indulgence, finding in itself the motive of action. It is the character so often seen in little on the political stage. It exhibits all the restlessness, temerity, and cunning which have marked the mighty hunters of mankind from Nimrod to Napoleon. The common fascination of man is, that these great men, as they are called, must act from some great motive. Milton has carefully marked in his Satan the intense selfishness, the alcohol of egotism, which would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven. To place this lust of self in opposition to denial of self or duty, and to show what exertions it would make, and what pains endure, to accomplish its end, is Milton's particular object in the character of Satan. But around this character he has thrown a singularity of darning, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendor, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity." — Coleridge's *Remarks*, p. 176.

In reading such a paragraph as this, we are struck by the vast improvement of the highest criticism, the philosophy of æsthetics, since the days of Addison. His papers in the *Spectator* on *Paradise Lost* were perhaps superior to any criticism that had been written in our language; and we must always acknowledge their good sense, their judiciousness, and the vast service they did to our literature, in settling the *Paradise Lost* on its proper level. But how little they satisfy us, even in treating of the *natura naturata*, the poem itself, and how little conception they show of the *natura naturans*, the individual genius of the author! Even in the periodical criticism of the present day, in the midst of much that is affected, much that is precipitate, much that is written for mere display, we find occasional reflections of a profundity and discrimination which we should seek in vain through Dryden or Addison, or the two Warton, or even Johnson, though much superior to the rest. Hurd has, perhaps, the merit of being the first who in this



27. Milton has displayed great skill in the delineations of Adam and Eve: he does not dress them up, after the fashion of orthodox theology, which had no spell to bind his free spirit, in the fancied robes of primitive righteousness. South, in one of his sermons, has drawn a picture of unfallen man, which is even poetical; but it might be asked by the reader, Why, then, did he fall? The first pair of Milton are innocent of course, but not less frail than their posterity; nor, except one circumstance, which seems rather physical intoxication than any thing else, do we find any sign of depravity superinduced upon their transgression. It might even be made a question for profound theologians, whether Eve, by taking amiss what Adam had said, and by self-conceit, did not sin before she tasted the fatal apple. The necessary paucity of actors in *Paradise Lost* is perhaps the apology of Sin and Death: they will not bear exact criticism, yet we do not wish them away.

28. The comparison of Milton with Homer has been founded on the acknowledged pre-eminence of each in his own language, and on the lax application of the word "epic" to their great poems. But there was not much in common either between their genius or its products; and Milton has taken less in direct imitation from Homer than from several other poets. His favorites had rather been Sophocles and Euripides: to them he owes the structure of his blank verse, his swell and dignity of style, his grave enunciation of moral and abstract sentiment, his tone of description, neither condensed like that of Dante, nor spread out with the diffuseness of the other Italians and of Homer himself. Next to these Greek tragedians, Virgil seems to have been his model; with the minor Latin poets, except Ovid, he does not, I think, show any great familiarity; and though abundantly conversant with Ariosto, Tasso, and Marini, we cannot say that they influenced his manner, which, unlike theirs, is severe and stately, never light, nor, in the sense we should apply the words to them, rapid and animated.<sup>1</sup>

country aimed at philosophical criticism: he had great ingenuity, a good deal of reading, and a facility in applying it; but he did not feel very deeply, was somewhat of a coxcomb, and having always before his eyes a model neither good in itself, nor made for him to imitate, he

assumes a dogmatic arrogance, which, as it always offends the reader, so for the most part stands in the way of the author's own search for truth.

<sup>1</sup> The solemnity of Milton is striking in those passages where some other poets would indulge a little in voluptuousness.

29. To Dante, however, he bears a much greater likeness. He has, in common with that poet, an uniform seriousness; for the brighter coloring of both is but the smile of a pensive mind, a fondness for argumentative speech, and for the same strain of argument. This indeed proceeds in part from the general similarity, the religious and even theological cast of their subjects: I advert particularly to the last part of Dante's poem. We may almost say, when we look to the resemblance of their prose writings in the proud sense of being born for some great achievement, which breathes through the *Vita Nuova*, as it does through Milton's earlier treatises, that they were twin spirits, and that each might have animated the other's body; that each would, as it were, have been the other, if he had lived in the other's age. As it is, I incline to prefer Milton, that is, the *Paradise Lost*, both because the subject is more extensive, and because the resources of his genius are more multifarious. Dante sins more against good taste, but only perhaps because there was no good taste in his time; for Milton has also too much a disposition to make the grotesque accessory to the terrible. Could Milton have written the lines on Ugolino? Perhaps he could. Those on Francesca? Not, I think, every line. Could Dante have planned such a poem as *Paradise Lost*? Not certainly, being Dante in 1300; but, living when Milton did, perhaps he could. It is, however, useless to go on with questions that no one can fully answer. To compare the two poets, read two or three cantos of the *Purgatory* or *Paradise*, and then two or three hundred lines of *Paradise Lost*. Then take Homer, or even Virgil: the difference will be striking. Yet, notwithstanding this analogy of their minds, I have not perceived that Milton imitates Dante very often, probably from having committed less to memory while young (and Dante was not the favorite poet of Italy when Milton was there), than of Ariosto and Tasso.

30. Each of these great men chose the subject that suited his natural temper and genius. What, it is curious to conjecture, would have been Milton's success in his original design, a British story? Far less, surely, than in *Paradise Lost*: he wanted the rapidity of the common heroic poem, and would always have been sententious, perhaps arid and heavy. Yet,

and the more so, because this is not in *Paradise Lost* are rather too plain, and wholly unpoetical to him. A few lines their gravity makes them worse.

even as religious poets, there are several remarkable distinctions between Milton and Dante. It has been justly observed, that, in the *Paradise* of Dante, he makes use of but three leading ideas, — light, music, and motion; and that Milton has drawn heaven in less pure and spiritual colors.<sup>1</sup> The philosophical imagination of the former, in this third part of his poem, almost defecated from all sublunary things by long and solitary musing, spiritualizes all that it touches. The genius of Milton, though itself subjective, was less so than that of Dante; and he has to recount, to describe, to bring deeds and passions before the eye. And two peculiar causes may be assigned for this difference in the treatment of celestial things between the *Divine Comedy* and the *Paradise Lost*: the dramatic form which Milton had originally designed to adopt, and his own theological bias towards anthropomorphism, which his posthumous treatise on religion has brought to light. This was no doubt in some measure inevitable in such a subject as that of *Paradise Lost*; yet much that is ascribed to God, sometimes with the sanction of Scripture, sometimes without it, is not wholly pleasing; such as "the oath that shook Heaven's whole circumference," and several other images of the same kind, which bring down the Deity in a manner not consonant to philosophical religion, however it may be borne out by the sensual analogies or mythic symbolism of Oriental writing.<sup>2</sup>

31. We rarely meet with feeble lines in *Paradise Lost*,<sup>3</sup> though with many that are hard, and, in a common use of the word, might be called prosaic. Yet few are truly prosaic; few wherein the tone is not some

Elevation  
of his  
style.

<sup>1</sup> Quarterly Review, June, 1825. This article contains some good and some questionable remarks on Milton: among the latter I reckon the proposition that his contempt for women is shown in the denunciation of Eve; an opinion not that of Addison or of many others, who have thought her exquisitely drawn.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson thinks that Milton should have secured the consistency of this poem by keeping immateriality out of sight, and entreating his reader to drop it from his thoughts. But here the subject forbade him to preserve consistency, if indeed there be inconsistency in supposing a rapid assumption of form by spiritual beings. For though the instance that Johnson alleges of inconsistency in Satan's animating a toad was not necessary, yet his animation of the serpent was absolutely indispensable. And the same has been

done by other poets, who do not scruple to suppose their gods, their fairies or devils, or their allegorical personages inspiring thoughts, and even uniting themselves with the soul, as well as assuming all kinds of form, though their natural appearance is almost always anthropomorphic. And, after all, Satan does not animate a real toad, but takes the shape of one. "Squat like a toad close by the ear of Eve." But he does enter a malapropos, so that the instance of Johnson is ill chosen. If he had mentioned the serpent, every one would have seen that the identity of the animal serpent with Satan is part of the original account.

<sup>3</sup> One of the few exceptions is in the sublime description of Death, where a wretched hemistich, "Fleets" — "in his fleet," stands as an under-

way distinguished from prose. The very artificial style of Milton, sparing in English idiom, and his study of a rhythm, not always the most grateful to our ears, but preserving his blank verse from a trivial flow, is the cause of this elevation. It is at least more removed from a prosaic cadence than the slovenly rhymes of such contemporary poets as Chamberlayne. His versification is entirely his own, framed on a Latin and chiefly a Virgilian model; the pause less frequently resting on the close of the line than in Homer, and much less than in our own dramatic poets. But it is also possible that the Italian and Spanish blank verse may have had some effect upon his ear

32. In the numerous imitations, and still more numerous traces, of older poetry which we perceive in *Paradise Lost*, it is always to be kept in mind that he had <sup>His blind-</sup> ~~ness.~~ only his recollection to rely upon. His blindness seems to have been complete before 1654; and I scarcely think that he had begun his poem, before the anxiety and trouble into which the public strife of the Commonwealth and the Restoration had thrown him gave leisure for immortal occupations. Then the remembrance of early reading came over his dark and lonely path like the moon emerging from the clouds. Then it was that the Muse was truly his; not only as she poured her creative inspiration into his mind, but as the daughter of Memory, coming with fragments of ancient melodies, the voice of Euripides and Homer and Tasso; sounds that he had loved in youth, and treasured up for the solace of his age. They who, though not enduring the calamity of Milton, have known what it is, when afar from books, in solitude or in travelling, or in the intervals of worldly care, to feed on poetical recollections, to murmur over the beautiful lines whose cadence has long delighted their ear, to recall the sentiments and images which retain by association the charm that early years once gave them,—they will feel the inestimable value of committing to the memory, in the prime of its power, what it will easily receive and indelibly retain. I know not indeed whether an education that deals much with poetry, such as is still usual in England, has any more solid argument among many in its favor, than that it lays the foundation of intellectual pleasures at the other extreme of life.

33. It is owing, in part, to his blindness, but more perhaps to his general residence in a city, that Milton, in the words of



Coleridge, is "not a picturesque but a musical poet;" or, <sup>His passion as I would prefer to say, is the latter more of the two.</sup> <sup>for music.</sup>

He describes visible things, and often with great powers of rendering them manifest, what the Greeks called *εὐάγεια*, though seldom with so much circumstantial exactness of observation as Spenser or Dante; but he feels music. The sense of vision delighted his imagination; but that of sound wrapped his whole soul in ecstasy. One of his trifling faults may be connected with this, the excessive passion he displays for stringing together sonorous names, sometimes so obscure that the reader associates nothing with them; as the word *Namaneos* in *Lycidas*, which long baffled the commentators. Hence his catalogues, unlike those of Homer and Virgil, are sometimes merely ornamental and misplaced. Thus the names of unbuilt cities come strangely forward in Adam's vision,<sup>1</sup> though he has afterwards gone over the same ground with better effect in *Paradise Regained*. In this there was also a mixture of his pedantry. But, though he was rather too ostentatious of learning, the nature of his subject demanded a good deal of episodical ornament. And this, rather than the precedents he might have alleged from the Italians and others,

<sup>Faults in Paradise Lost.</sup> is perhaps the best apology for what some grave critics have censured, his frequent allusions to fable and mythology. These give much relief to the severity of the poem, and few readers would dispense with them. Less excuse can be made for some affectation of science which has produced hard and unpleasing lines; but he had been born in an age when more credit was gained by reading much than by writing well. The faults, however, of *Paradise Lost* are in general less to be called faults than necessary adjuncts of the qualities we most admire, and idiosyncrasies of a mighty genius. The verse of Milton is sometimes wanting in grace, and almost always in ease; but what better can be said of his prose? His foreign idioms are too frequent in the one; but they predominate in the other.

34. The slowness of Milton's advance to glory is now <sup>its progress</sup> generally owned to have been much exaggerated: <sup>to fact</sup> we might say that the reverse was nearer the truth. "The sale of 1,500 copies in two years," says Johnson, "in opposition to so much recent enmity, and to a style of versification new to all and disgusting to many, was an uncommon

<sup>1</sup> *Par. Lost*, xl. 320

example of the prevalence of genius. The demand did not immediately increase; for many more readers than were supplied at first the nation did not afford. Only 3,000 were sold in eleven years." It would hardly, however, be said, even in this age, of a poem 3,000 copies of which had been sold in eleven years, that its success had been small; and some, perhaps, might doubt whether *Paradise Lost*, published eleven years since, would have met with a greater demand. There is sometimes a want of congeniality in public taste which no power of genius will overcome. For Milton it must be said by every one conversant with the literature of the age that preceded Addison's famous criticism, from which some have dated the reputation of *Paradise Lost*, that he took his place among great poets from the beginning. The fancy of Johnson, that few dared to praise it, and that "the revolution put an end to the secrecy of love," is without foundation: the Government of Charles II. was not so absurdly tyrannical; nor did Dryden, the court's own poet, hesitate, in his preface to the *State of Innocence*, published soon after Milton's death, to speak of its original, *Paradise Lost*, as "undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, and most sublime poems which either this age or nation has produced."

35. The neglect which *Paradise Lost* never experienced seems to have been long the lot of *Paradise Re-* *Paradise*  
*gained.* It was not popular with the world: it was *Regained.* long believed to manifest a decay of the poet's genius; and, in spite of all that the critics have written, it is still but the favorite of some whose predilections for the Miltonic style are very strong. The subject is so much less capable of calling forth the vast powers of his mind, that we should be unfair in comparing it throughout with the greater poem: it has been called a model of the shorter epic, an action comprehending few characters and a brief space of time.<sup>1</sup> The love of Milton for dramatic dialogue, imbibed from Greece, is still more apparent than in *Paradise Lost*: the whole poem, in fact, may almost be accounted a drama of primal simplicity; the narrative and descriptive part serving rather to diversify and relieve the speeches of the actors, than their speeches, as in the legitimate epic, to enliven the narration. *Paradise Regained* abounds with passages equal to any of the same nature in *Paradise Lost*; but the argumentative tone is kept up till

<sup>1</sup> Todd's *Milton* vol. v. p. 308

it produces some tediousness; and perhaps, on the whole, less pains have been exerted to adorn and elevate that which appeals to the imagination.

36. *Samson Agonistes* is the latest of Milton's poems: we see in it, perhaps more distinctly than in *Paradise Regained*, the ebb of a mighty tide. An air of uncommon grandeur prevails throughout; but the language is less poetical than in *Paradise Lost*: the vigor of thought remains, but it wants much of its ancient eloquence. Nor is the lyric tone well kept up by the chorus: they are too sententious, too slow in movement, and, except by the metre, are not easily distinguishable from the other personages. But this metre is itself infelicitous; the lines being frequently of a number of syllables not recognized in the usage of English poetry, and, destitute of rhythmical measure, fall into prose. Milton seems to have forgotten that the ancient chorus had a musical accompaniment.

37. The style of *Samson*, being essentially that of *Paradise Lost*, may show us how much more the latter poem is founded on the Greek tragedians than on Homer. In *Samson* we have sometimes the pompous tone of *Æschylus*, more frequently the sustained majesty of *Sophocles*; but the religious solemnity of Milton's own temperament, as well as the nature of the subject, have given a sort of breadth, an unbroken severity, to the whole drama. It is perhaps not very popular even with the lovers of poetry; yet, upon close comparison, we should find that it deserves a higher place than many of its prototypes. We might search the Greek tragedies long for a character so powerfully conceived and maintained as that of *Samson* himself; and it is but conformable to the sculptural simplicity of that form of drama which Milton adopted, that all the rest should be kept in subordination to it. "It is only," Johnson says, "by a blind confidence in the reputation of Milton, that a drama can be praised in which the intermediate parts have neither cause nor consequence, neither hasten nor retard the catastrophe." Such a drama is certainly not to be ranked with *Othello* and *Macbeth*, or even with the *Œdipus* or the *Hippolytus*; but a similar criticism is applicable to several famous tragedies in the less artificial school of antiquity,—to the *Prometheus* and the *Persæ* of *Æschylus*, and, if we look strictly, to not a few of the two other masters.

38. The poetical genius of Dryden came slowly to perfection. Born in 1631, his first short poems, or, as we might rather say, copies of verses, were not written till he approached thirty; and though some of his dramas, not indeed of the best, belong to the next period of his life, he had reached the age of fifty before his high rank as a poet had been confirmed by indubitable proof. Yet he had manifested a superiority to his immediate contemporaries: his *Astræa Redux*, on the Restoration, is well versified; the lines are seldom weak; the couplets have that pointed manner which Cowley and Denham had taught the world to require; they are harmonious, but not so varied as the style he afterwards adopted. The *Annus Mirabilis*, in 1667, is of a higher cast: it is not so animated as the later poetry of Dryden, because the alternate quatrain, in which he followed Davenant's *Gondibert*, is hostile to animation; but it is not unfavorable to another excellence, — condensed and vigorous thought. Davenant indeed and Denham may be reckoned the models of Dryden, so far as this can be said of a man of original genius, and one far superior to theirs. The distinguishing characteristic of Dryden, it has been said by Scott, was the power of reasoning, and expressing the result in appropriate language. This indeed was the characteristic of the two whom we have named; and so far as Dryden has displayed it, which he eminently has done, he bears a resemblance to them. But it is insufficient praise for this great poet. His rapidity of conception and readiness of expression are higher qualities. He never loiters about a single thought or image, never labors about the turn of a phrase. The impression upon our minds, that he wrote with exceeding ease, is irresistible; and I do not know that we have any evidence to repel it. The admiration of Dryden gains upon us, if I may speak from my own experience, with advancing years, as we become more sensible of the difficulty of his style, and of the comparative facility of that which is merely imaginative.

39. Dryden may be considered as a satirical, a reasoning, a descriptive and narrative, a lyric poet, and as a <sup>Absalom</sup> translator. As a dramatist we must return to him and <sup>Achitophel</sup> again. The greatest of his satires is *Absalom and Achitophel*, — that work in which his powers became fully known to the world, and which, as many think, he never surpassed. The admirable fitness of the English couplet for



satire had never been shown before: in less skilful hands it had been ineffective. He does not frequently, in this poem, carry the sense beyond the second line, which, except when skilfully contrived, as it often is by himself, is apt to enfeeble the emphasis: his triplets are less numerous than usual, but energetic. The spontaneous ease of expression, the rapid transitions, the general elasticity and movement, have never been excelled. It is superfluous to praise the discrimination and vivacity of the chief characters, especially Shaftesbury and Buckingham. Satire, however, is so much easier than epanegyric, that with Ormond, Ossory, and Mulgrave he has not been quite so successful. In the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*, written by Tate, one long passage alone is inserted by Dryden. It is excellent in its line of satire, but the line is less elevated: the persons delineated are less important, and he has indulged more his natural proneness to virulent ribaldry. This fault of Dryden's writings, it is just to observe, belonged less to the man than to the age. No libellous invective, no coarseness of allusion, had ever been spared towards a private or political enemy. We read with nothing but disgust the satirical poetry of Cleveland, Butler, Oldham, and Marvell, or even of men whose high rank did not soften their style, — Rochester, Dorset, Mulgrave. In Dryden there was, for the first time, a poignancy of wit which atones for his severity, and a discretion even in his taunts, which made them more cutting.

40. *The Medal*, which is in some measure a continuation of *Absalom and Achitophel*, since it bears wholly on Mac Flecknoe. Shaftesbury, is of unequal merit, and, on the whole, falls much below the former. In *Mac Flecknoe*, his satire on his rival Shadwell, we must allow for the inferiority of the subject, which could not bring out so much of Dryden's higher powers of mind; but scarcely one of his poems is more perfect. Johnson, who admired Dryden almost as much as he could any one, has yet, from his proneness to critical censure, very much exaggerated the poet's defects. "His faults of negligence are beyond recital. Such is the unevenness of his compositions, that ten lines are seldom found together without something of which the reader is ashamed." This might be true, or more nearly true, of other poets of the seventeenth century. Ten good consecutive lines will, perhaps, rarely be found, except in Denham, Davenant, and Waller. But it

seems a great exaggeration as to Dryden. I would particularly instance *Mac Flecknoe* as a poem of about four hundred lines, in which no one will be condemned as weak or negligent, though three or four are rather too ribaldrous for our taste. There are also passages, much exceeding ten lines, in *Absalom* and *Achitophel*, as well as in the later works, the *Fables*, which excite in the reader none of the shame for the poet's carelessness with which Johnson has furnished him.

41. The argumentative talents of Dryden appear, more or less, in the greater part of his poetry: reason in rhyme was his peculiar delight, to which he seems to escape from the mere excursions of fancy. And it is remarkable that he reasons better and more closely in poetry than in prose. His productions more exclusively reasoning are the *Religio Laici*, and the *Hind and Panther*. The latter is every way an extraordinary poem. It was written in the hey-day of exultation, by a recent proselyte to a winning side as he dreamed it to be, by one who never spared a weaker foe, nor repressed his triumph with a dignified moderation. A year was hardly to elapse before he exchanged this fulness of pride for an old age of disappointment and poverty. Yet then, too, his genius was unquenched, and even his satire was not less severe.

42. The first lines in the *Hind and Panther* are justly reputed among the most musical in our language; and perhaps we observe their rhythm the better because it does not gain much by the sense: for the allegory and the fable are seen, even in this commencement, to be awkwardly blended. Yet notwithstanding their evident incoherence, which sometimes leads to the verge of absurdity, and the facility they give to ridicule, I am not sure that Dryden was wrong in choosing this singular fiction. It was his aim to bring forward an old argument in as novel a style as he could: a dialogue between a priest and a parson would have made but a dull poem, even if it had contained some of the excellent paragraphs we read in the *Hind and Panther*. It is the grotesqueness and originality of the fable that give this poem its peculiar zest, of which no reader, I conceive, is insensible; and it is also by this means that Dryden has contrived to relieve his reasoning by short but beautiful touches of description, such as the sudden stream of light from heaven

which announces the victory of Sedgemoor near the end of the second book.<sup>1</sup>

43. The wit in the Hind and Panther is sharp, ready, and pleasant; the reasoning is sometimes admirably close and strong; it is the energy of Bossuet in verse. I do not know that the main argument of the Roman Church could be better stated: all that has been well said for tradition and authority, all that serves to expose the inconsistencies of a vacillating Protestantism, is in the Hind's mouth. It is such an answer as a candid man should admit to any doubts of Dryden's sincerity. He who could argue as powerfully as the Hind may well be allowed to have thought himself in the right. Yet he could not forget a few bold thoughts of his more sceptical days; and such is his bias to sarcasm, that he cannot restrain himself from reflections on kings and priests when he is most contending for them.<sup>2</sup>

44. The Fables of Dryden, or stories modernized from Boccaccio and Chaucer, are at this day probably the most read and the most popular of Dryden's poems. They contain passages of so much more impressive beauty, and are altogether so far more adapted to general sympathy, than those we have mentioned, that I should not hesitate to concur in this judgment. Yet Johnson's accusation of negligence is better supported by these than by the earlier poems. Whether it were that age and misfortune, though they had not impaired the poet's vigor, had rendered its continual exertion more wearisome, or, as is perhaps the better supposition, he reckoned an easy style, sustained above prose, in some places, rather by metre than expression, more fitted to narration, we find much which might appear slovenly to critics of Johnson's temper. The latter seems, in fact, to have conceived, like Milton, a theory, that good writing, at least in verse, is never either to follow the change of fashion, or to sink into familiar phrase; and that any deviation from this rigor should be branded as low and colloquial. But Dryden wrote on a different plan. He thought, like Ariosto, and like Chaucer himself, whom he had to improve, that a story,

<sup>1</sup> [I am indebted to a distinguished friend for the explanation of this line, which I had misunderstood. — 1853.]

<sup>2</sup> "By education most have been misled; So they believe because they so were bred."

The priest continues what the nurse began.

And thus the child imposes on the man." — Part iii.

"Till you the backing of your friends?" his new allies might have said

especially when not heroic, should be told in easy and flowing language, without too much difference from that of prose; relying on his harmony, his occasional inversions, and his concealed skill in the choice of words, for its effect on the reader. He found also a tone of popular idiom, not perhaps old English idiom, but such as had crept into society, current among his contemporaries; and though this has in many cases now become insufferably vulgar, and in others looks like affectation, we should make some allowance for the times in condemning it. This last blemish, however, is not much imputable to the Fables. Their beauties are innumerable; yet few are very well chosen: some, as Guiscard and Sigismunda, he has injured through coarseness of mind, which neither years nor religion had purified; and we want in all the power over emotion, the charm of sympathy, the skilful arrangement and selection of circumstance, which narrative poetry claims as its highest graces.

45. Dryden's fame as a lyric poet depends a very little on his Ode on Mrs. Killigrew's death, but almost entirely on that for St. Cecilia's Day, commonly called <sup>His Odes:</sup> Alexander's Feast. The former, which is much <sup>Alexander's Feast.</sup> praised by Johnson, has a few fine lines, mingled with a far greater number ill conceived and ill expressed: the whole composition has that spirit which Dryden hardly ever wanted but it is too faulty for high praise. The latter used to pass for the best work of Dryden, and the best ode in the language. Many would now agree with me, that it is neither one nor the other, and that it was rather overrated during a period when criticism was not at a high point. Its beauties, indeed, are undeniable; it has the raciness, the rapidity, the mastery of language, which belong to Dryden; the transitions are animated, the contrasts effective. But few lines are highly poetical, and some sink to the level of a common drinking song. It has the defects as well as the merits of that poetry which is written for musical accompaniment.

46. Of Dryden as a translator, it is needless to say much. In some instances, as in an ode of Horace, he has <sup>His trans-</sup> done extremely well; but his Virgil is, in my ap- <sup>lation of</sup> prehension, the least successful of his chief works. <sup>Virgil.</sup> Lines of consummate excellence are frequently shot, like threads of gold, through the web; but the general texture is of an ordinary material. Dryden was little fitted for a trans-



lator of Virgil : his mind was more rapid and vehement than that of his original, but by far less elegant and judicious. This translation seems to have been made in haste : it is more negligent than any of his own poetry ; and the style is often almost studiously, and, as it were, spitefully vulgar.

47. The supremacy of Dryden from the death of Milton in 1674 to his own in 1700 was not only unapproached by any English poet, but he held almost a complete monopoly of English poetry. This latter period of the seventeenth century, setting aside these two great names, is one remarkably sterile in poetical genius. Under the first Stuarts, men of warm imagination and sensibility, though with deficient taste and little command of language, had done some honor to our literature : though once neglected, they have come forward again in public esteem ; and, if not very extensively read, have been valued by men of kindred minds full as much as they deserve. The versifiers of Charles II. and William's days have experienced the opposite fate : popular for a time, and long so far known, at least by name, as to have entered rather largely into collections of poetry, they are now held in no regard, nor do they claim much favor from just criticism. Their object in general was to write like men of the world, — with ease, wit, sense, and spirit, but dreading any soaring of fancy, any ardor of moral emotion, as the probable source of ridicule in their readers. Nothing quenches the flame of poetry more than this fear of the prosaic multitude, — unless it is the community of habits with this very multitude, a life such as these poets generally led, of taverns and brothels, or, what came much to the same, of the court. We cannot say of Dryden, that "he bears no traces of those sable streams ;" they sully too much the plumage of that stately swan : but his indomitable genius carries him upwards to a purer empyrean. The rest are just distinguishable from one another, not by any high gifts of the muse, but by degrees of spirit, of ease, of poignancy, of skill and harmony in versification, of good sense and acuteness. They may easily be disposed of. Cleveland is sometimes humorous, but succeeds only in the lightest kinds of poetry. Marvell wrote sometimes with more taste and feeling than was usual ; but his satires are gross and stupid. Oldham, far superior in this respect, ranks perhaps next to Dryden : he is spirited and pointed ; but his versifica-

Decline of  
poetry  
from the  
Restora-  
tion.

Some minor  
poets con-  
sidered.

tion is too negligent, and his subjects temporary. Roscommon, one of the best for harmony and correctness of language, has little vigor, but he never offends; and Pope has justly praised his "unspotted bays." Mulgrave affects ease and spirit; but his Essay on Satire belies the supposition that Dryden had any share in it. Rochester, endowed by nature with more considerable and varied genius, might have raised himself to a higher place than he holds. Of Otway, Duke, and several more, it is not worth while to give any character. The Revolution did nothing for poetry. William's reign, always excepting Dryden, is our *nadir* in works of imagination. Then came Blackmore with his epic poems of Prince Arthur and King Arthur, and Pomfret with his Choice, both popular in their own age, and both intolerable, by their frigid and tame monotony, in the next. The lighter poetry, meantime, of song and epigram, did not sink along with the serious: the state of society was much less adverse to it. Rochester, Dorset, and some more whose names are unknown or not easily traced, do credit to the Caroline period.

48. In the year 1699, a poem was published, Garth's Dispensary, which deserves attention, not so much for its own merit, though it comes nearest to Dryden, at whatever interval, as from its indicating a transitional state in our versification. The general structure of the couplet through the seventeenth century may be called abnormous: the sense is not only often carried beyond the second line, which the French avoid, but the second line of one couplet and the first of the next are not seldom united in a single sentence or a portion of one; so that the two, though not rhyming, must be read as a couplet. The former, when as dexterously managed as it was by Dryden, adds much to the beauty of the general versification; but the latter, a sort of adultery of the lines already wedded to other companions at rhyme's altar, can scarcely ever be pleasing, unless it be in narrative poetry, where it may bring the sound nearer to prose. A tendency, however, to the French rule, of constantly terminating the sense with the couplet, will be perceived to have increased from the Restoration. Roscommon seldom deviates from it; and, in long passages of Dryden himself, there will hardly be found an exception. But perhaps it had not been so uniform in any former production as in the Dispensary. The versification of this once-famous mock-heroic poem is smooth and

regular, but not forcible; the language clear and neat; the parodies and allusions happy. Many lines are excellent in the way of pointed application; and some are remembered and quoted, where few call to mind the author. It has been remarked, that Garth enlarged and altered the *Dispensary* in almost every edition; and, what is more uncommon, that every alteration was for the better. This poem may be called an imitation of the *Lutrin*, inasmuch as, but for the *Lutrin*, it might probably not have been written; and there are even particular resemblances. The subject, which is a quarrel between the physicians and apothecaries of London, may vie with that of Boileau in want of general interest; yet it seems to afford more diversity to the satirical poet. Garth, as has been observed, is a link of transition between the style and turn of poetry under Charles and William, and that we find in Addison, Prior, Tickell, and Pope, during the reign of Anne.

#### SECT. IV.—ON LATIN POETRY.

49. THE Jesuits were not unmindful of the credit their Latin poets had done them in periods more favorable to that exercise of taste than the present. Even in Italy, which had ceased to be a very genial soil, one of their number, Ceva, may deserve mention. His *Jesus Puer* is a long poem, not inelegantly written, but rather singular in some of its descriptions, where the poet has been more solicitous to adorn his subject than attentive to its proper character; and the same objection might be made to some of its episodes. Ceva wrote also a philosophical poem, extolled by Corniani, but which has not fallen into my hands. Averani, a Florentine of various erudition, Cappellari, Strozzi, author of a poem on chocolate, and several others, both within the order of Loyola and without it, cultivated Latin poetry with some success.<sup>2</sup> But, though some might be superior as poets, none were more remarkable or famous than Sergardi, best known by some biting satires under the name of Q. Sectanus, which he levelled at his per-

<sup>1</sup> Corniani, viii. 214; Salfi, xiv. 257.

<sup>2</sup> Bibl. Choisie, vol. xxii.; Salfi, xiv. 238, *et post.*

sonal enemy, Gravina. The reputation, indeed, of Gravina with posterity has not been affected by such libels; but they are not wanting either in poignancy and spirit, or in a command of Latin phrase.<sup>1</sup>

50. The superiority of France in Latin verse was no longer contested by Holland or Germany. Several poets of real merit belong to this period. The first in time was Claude Quillet, who, in his *Callipædia*, bears the Latinized name of Leti. This is written with much elegance of style and a very harmonious versification. No writer has a more Virgilian cadence. Though inferior to Sammarthanus, he may be reckoned high among the French poets. He has been reproached with too open an exposition of some parts of his subject; which applies only to the second book.

51. The Latin poems of Menage are not displeasing: he has indeed no great fire or originality; but the harmonious couplets glide over the ear, and the mind is pleased to recognize the tessellated fragments of Ovid and Tibullus. His affected passion for Mademoiselle Lavergue, and lamentations about her cruelty, are ludicrous enough, when we consider the character of the man, as Vadius in the *Femmes Savantes* of Molière. They are perfect models of want of truth; but it is a want of truth to nature, not to the conventional forms of modern Latin verse.

52. A far superior performance is the poem on gardens by the Jesuit René Rapin. For skill in varying and adorning his subject, for a truly Virgilian spirit in expression, for the exclusion of feeble, prosaic, or awkward lines, he may perhaps be equal to any poet, to Sammarthanus, or to Sannazarius himself. His cadences are generally very gratifying to the ear; and, in this respect, he is much above Vida.<sup>2</sup> But his subject, or his genius, has prevented him from rising very high: he is the poet of gardens; and what

<sup>1</sup> Salfi, xiv. 299; Corniani, viii. 280.

<sup>2</sup> As the poem of Rapin is not in the hands of every one who has taste for Latin poetry, I will give as a specimen the introduction to the second book:—

“Me memora atque omnis memorum pulcherrimus ordo,  
Et spatium umbrarum late fundanda per hortum  
Invitant; hortis nam et florentibus umbra  
Abfuerit reliquo deerit sua gratia ruri.  
Vos grandes luci et silvas aspirate canenti;

Is mihi contingat vestro de munere ramus,  
Unde sacri quando velant sua tempora vates,  
Ipse et anem meritam capiti imposuisse coronam.  
Jam se cantant frondosa cacumina querens  
Inclinant, plauduntque comis memora alta coruscis.  
Ipsa mihi læto fremitu, assensuque secundo  
Ex totis plausum resonat Gallia silvis.  
Nec me deinde suo tenent clamore Citharæon,



gardens are to nature, that is he to mightier poets. There is also too monotonous a repetition of nearly the same images, as in his long enumeration of flowers in the first book: the descriptions are separately good, and great artifice is shown in varying them; but the variety could not be sufficient to remove the general sameness that belongs to an horticultural catalogue. Rapin was a great admirer of box and all topiary works, or trees cut into artificial forms.

53. The first book of the Gardens of Rapin is on flowers, the second on trees, the third on waters, and the fourth on fruits. The poem is of about 3,000 lines, sustained with equable dignity. All kinds of graceful associations are mingled with the description of his flowers, in the fanciful style of Ovid and Darwin: the violet is Ianthia, who lurked in valleys to shun the love of Apollo, and stained her face with purple to preserve her chastity; the rose is Rhodanthe, proud of her beauty, and worshipped by the people in the place of Diana, but changed by the indignant Apollo to a tree; while the poplure, who had adored her, are converted into her thorns; and her chief lovers, into snails and butterflies. A tendency to conceit is perceived in Rapin, as in the two poets to whom we have just compared him. Thus, in some pretty lines, he supposes Nature to have "tried her 'prentice hand" in making a convolvulus before she ventured upon a lily.<sup>1</sup>

54. In Rapin there will generally be remarked a certain redundancy, which fastidious critics might call tautology of expression. But this is not uncommon in Virgil. The Georgics have rarely been more happily imitated, especially in their didactic parts, than by Rapin in the Gardens: but he has not the high flights of his prototype; his digressions are short, and belong closely to the subject; we have no plague, no civil war, no Eurydice. If he praises Louis XIV., it is more as the founder of the Garden of Versailles than as the conqueror of Flanders; though his concluding lines emulate,

*Mænnaque Arcadice toties lustrata de-*  
*bus,*

*Non Dodonæ saltus, silvæque Molœch,*  
*Aut nigricantibus nemorosa Cœlynæ.*  
*Et quos curribus celebravit labora lucos:*  
*Una necesse cæcis tellus jam Frœnce wor-*  
*tur,*

*Que tot in illis passim lustrissima silvis,*  
*Conspicienda est late mœnula curie*  
*Obstitit, interque solus commendat ar-*  
*ua.*

One or two words in these lines are not strictly correct; but they are highly Virgilian, both in manner and rhythm.

1 " *Et tu rumpis humum, et multo te flore*  
*profundas,*  
*qui rigas inter seipsos, convolvulus, valles,*  
*Dulce rudimentum meditantis illis quo-*  
*dam*  
*Natura, cum sece opera ad majora per-*  
*ret.*"

with no unworthy spirit, those of the last Georgic.<sup>1</sup> It may be added, that some French critics have thought the famous poem of Delille on the same subject inferior to that of Rapin.

55. Santeul (or Santolius) has been reckoned one of the best Latin poets whom France ever produced. He began by celebrating the victories of Louis and the virtues of contemporary heroes. A nobleness of thought and a splendor of language distinguish the poetry of Santeul, who furnished many inscriptions for public monuments. The hymns which he afterwards wrote for the breviary of the Church of Paris have been still more admired; and, at the request of others, he enlarged his collection of sacred verse. But I have not read the poetry of Santeul, and give only the testimony of French critics.<sup>2</sup>

56. England might justly boast, in the earlier part of the century, her Milton; nay, I do not know, that with the exception of a well-known and very pleasing poem, though perhaps hardly of classical simplicity, by Cowley on himself, — *Epitaphium Vivi Auctoris*, — we can produce any thing equally good in this period. The Latin verse of Barrow is forcible and full of mind, but not sufficiently redolent of antiquity.<sup>3</sup> Yet versification became, about the time of the Restoration, if not the distinctive study, at least the favorite exercise, of the University of Oxford. The collection entitled *Musæ Anglicanæ*, published near the end of the century, contains little from any other quarter. Many of these poems relate to the political themes of the day, and eulogize the reigning king, — Charles, James, or William; others are on philosophical subjects, which they endeavor to decorate with classical phrase. Their character does not, on the whole, pass mediocrity: they are often incorrect and somewhat turgid, but occasionally display a certain felicity in adapting ancient lines to their subject, and some liveliness of invention. The golden age of Latin verse in England was yet to come.

<sup>1</sup> "Hæc magni insidens vestigia sacra Maronis.  
Hæ super hortens, Claro de monte canebam.  
Latet in magnæ: quo tempore Francica tellus  
Rege beatus, rebusque superba secundis.  
Et sua per populos lute dare jura volentes  
Cæperunt, et toti jam morem imponere mundi."  
Baillet; *Biogr. Universelle*.

<sup>2</sup> The following stanzas on an erring conscience will sufficiently prove this: —

"Tyranne vitæ, fux temeraria,  
Infide dux, ignobile vitæculum,  
Si lûs dolosum, ænigma præsens,  
Ingenui labi rinthe voti.  
Assensus errans, livitide potens  
Mentis propago, quoniam vetuit Deus  
Nasci, sed orte principitum  
Attribuit, regimenque sanctum." *for*

## CHAPTER VI.

## HISTORY OF DRAMATIC LITERATURE FROM 1650 TO 1700.

## SECTION I.

Racine — Minor French Tragedians — Molière — Regnard, and other Comic Writers.

1. FEW tragedies or dramatic works of any kind are now recorded by historians of Italian literature: those of Delfino, afterwards Patriarch of Aquileia, which are esteemed among the best, were possibly written before the middle of the century, and were not published till after its termination. The Corradino of Caraccio, in 1694, was also valued at the time.<sup>1</sup> Nor can Spain arrest us longer: the school of Calderon in national comedy extended no doubt beyond the death of Philip IV. in 1665, and many of his own religious pieces are of as late a date: nor were names wholly wanting, which are said to merit remembrance, in the feeble reign of Charles II.; but they must be left for such as make a particular study of Spanish literature.<sup>2</sup> We are called to a nobler stage.

2. Corneille belongs in his glory to the earlier period of this century; though his inferior tragedies, more numerous than the better, would fall within the later. Fontenelle, indeed, as a devoted admirer, attributes considerable merit to those which the general voice both of critics and of the public had condemned.<sup>3</sup> Meantime, another luminary arose on the opposite side of the horizon. The first tragedy of Jean Racine, *Les Frères Ennemis*, was

<sup>1</sup> Walker's *Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, p. 201; *Sald.* xii. 57

<sup>2</sup> Bouterwek

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. du Théâtre François, in Œuvres*

de Fontenelle, iii. 111. St. Evremont also despised the French public for not admiring the *Sophonisbe* of Corneille, which he had made too Roman for their taste.

represented in 1664, when he was twenty-five years of age. It is so far below his great works as to be scarcely mentioned, yet does not want indications of the genius they were to display. Alexandre, in 1665, raised the young poet to more distinction. It is said that he showed this tragedy to Corneille, who praised his versification, but advised him to avoid a path which he was not fitted to tread. It is acknowledged by the advocates of Racine, that the characters are feebly drawn, and that the conqueror of Asia sinks to the level of a hero in one of those romances of gallantry which had vitiated the taste of France.

3. The glory of Racine commenced with the representation of his *Andromaque* in 1667, which was not printed till the end of the following year. He was now at once compared with Corneille, and the scales long continued to oscillate. Criticism, satire, epigrams, were unsparingly launched against the rising poet. But his rival pursued the worst policy by obstinately writing bad tragedies. The public naturally compare the present with the present, and forget the past. When he gave them Pertharite, they were dispensed from looking back to Cinna. It is acknowledged even by Fontenelle, that, during the height of Racine's fame, the world placed him at least on an equality with his predecessor; a decision from which that critic, the relation and friend of Corneille, appeals to what he takes to be the verdict of a later age.

4. The *Andromaque* was sufficient to show, that Racine had more skill in the management of a plot, in the display of emotion, in power over the sympathy of the spectator, at least where the gentler feelings are concerned, in beauty and grace of style, in all except nobleness of character, strength of thought, and impetuosity of language. He took his fable from Euripides, but changed it according to the requisitions of the French theatre and of French manners. Some of these changes are for the better, as the substitution of Astyanax for an unknown Molossus of the Greek tragedian, the supposed son of Andromache by Pyrrhus. "Most of those," says Racine himself very justly, "who have heard of Andromache, know her only as the widow of Hector and the mother of Astyanax. They cannot reconcile themselves to her loving another husband and another son." And he has finely improved this happy idea of preserving Astyanax, by



making the Greeks, jealous of his name, send an embassy by Orestes to demand his life; at once deepening the interest and developing the plot.

5. The female characters, Andromache and Hermione, are drawn with all Racine's delicate perception of ideal beauty: the one, indeed, prepared for his hand by those great masters in whose school he had disciplined his own gifts of nature, — Homer, Euripides, Virgil; the other more original and more full of dramatic effect. It was, as we are told, the fine acting of Mademoiselle de Champmélé in this part, generally reckoned one of the most difficult on the French stage, which secured the success of the play. Racine, after the first representation, threw himself at her feet in a transport of gratitude, which was soon changed to love. It is more easy to censure some of the other characters. Pyrrhus is bold, haughty, passionate, the true son of Achilles, except where he appears as the lover of Andromache. It is inconceivable and truly ridiculous, that a Greek of the heroic age, and such a Greek as Pyrrhus is represented by those whose imagination has given him existence, should feel the respectful passion towards his captive which we might reasonably expect in the romances of chivalry, or should express it in the tone of conventional gallantry that suited the court of Versailles. But Orestes is far worse: love-mad, and yet talking in gallant conceits, cold and polite, he discredits the poet, the tragedy, and the son of Agamemnon himself. It is better to kill one's mother than to utter such trash. In hinting that the previous madness of Orestes was for the love of Hermione, Racine has presumed too much on the ignorance, and too much on the bad taste, of his audience. But far more injudicious is his fantastic remorse and the supposed vision of the Furies in the last scene. It is astonishing that Racine should have challenged comparison with one of the most celebrated scenes of Euripides in circumstances that deprived him of the possibility of rendering his own effective. For the style of the *Andromaque*, it abounds with grace and beauty: but there are, to my apprehension, more insipid and feeble lines, and a more effeminate tone, than in his later tragedies.

6. *Britannicus* appeared in 1669; and, in this admirable play, Racine first showed that he did not depend on the tone of gallantry usual among his courtly hearers, nor on the languid sympathies that it excites. Terror

*Britannicus.*

and pity, the twin-spirits of tragedy, to whom Aristotle has assigned the great moral office of purifying the passions, are called forth in their shadowy forms to sustain the consummate beauties of his diction. His subject was original and happy; with that historic truth which usage required, and that poetical probability which fills up the outline of historic truth without disguising it. What can be more entirely dramatic, what more terrible in the sense that Aristotle means (that is, the spectator's sympathy with the dangers of the innocent) than the absolute master of the world, like the veiled prophet of Khorasan, throwing off the appearances of virtue, and standing out at once in the maturity of enormous guilt? A presaging gloom, like that which other poets have sought by the hackneyed artifices of superstition, hangs over the scenes of this tragedy, and deepens at its close. We sympathize by turns with the guilty alarms of Agrippina, the virtuous consternation of Burrhus, the virgin modesty of Junia, the unsuspecting ingenuousness of Britannicus. Few tragedies on the French stage, or indeed on any stage, save those of Shakspeare, display so great a variety of contrasted characters. None, indeed, are ineffective, except the confidante of Agrippina; for Narcissus is very far from being the mere confidant of Nero: he is, as in history, his preceptor in crime; and his cold villainy is well contrasted with the fierce passion of the despot. The criticisms of Fontenelle and others on small incidents in the plot, such as the concealment of Nero behind a curtain that he may hear the dialogue between Junia and Britannicus, which is certainly more fit for comedy,<sup>1</sup> ought not to weigh against such excellence as we find in all the more essential requisites of a tragic drama. Racine had much improved his language since *Andromaque*; the conventional phraseology about flames and fine eyes, though not wholly relinquished, is less frequent; and if he has not here reached, as he never did, the peculiar impetuosity of Corneille, nor given to his Romans the grandeur of his predecessor's conception, he is full of lines wherein, as every word is effective, there can hardly be any deficiency of vigor. It is the vigor indeed of Virgil, not of Lucan.

7. In one passage, Racine has, I think, excelled Shakspeare. They have both taken the same idea from Plutarch. The lines of Shakspeare are in *Antony and Cleopatra*:—

<sup>1</sup> It is, however, taken from Tacitus.

"The demon, that's the spirit that keeps thee, is  
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,  
Where th'esar's is not; but, near him, thy angel  
Becomes a fear, as being o'erpowered."

These are, to my apprehension, not very forcible, and obscure even to those who know, what many do not, that by "a fear" he meant a common goblin, a supernatural being of a more plebeian rank than a demon or angel. The single verse of Racine is magnificent:—

"Mon génie étouffé tremble devant le sien."

8. Berenice, the next tragedy of Racine, is a surprising proof of what can be done by a great master; but it must be admitted that it wants many of the essential qualities that are required in the drama. It might almost be compared with Timon of Athens, by the absence of fable and movement. For nobleness and delicacy of sentiment, for grace of style, it deserves every praise; but is rather tedious in the closet, and must be far more so on the stage. This is the only tragedy of Racine, unless perhaps we except *Athalie*, in which the story presents an evident moral: but no poet is more uniformly moral in his sentiments. Corneille, to whom the want of dramatic fable was never any great objection, attempted the subject of Berenice about the same time with far inferior success. It required what he could not give,—the picture of two hearts struggling against a noble and a blameless love.

9. It was unfortunate for Racine, that he did not more frequently break through the prejudices of the French theatre in favor of classical subjects. A field was open of almost boundless extent,—the mediæval history of Europe, and especially of France herself. His predecessor had been too successful in the *Cid* to leave it doubtful whether an audience would approve such an innovation at the hands of a favored tragedian. Racine, however, did not venture on a step, which, in the next century, Voltaire turned so much to account, and which made the fortune of some inferior tragedies. But considering the distance of place equivalent, for the ends of the drama, to that of time, he founded on an event in the Turkish history, not more than thirty years old, his next tragedy, that of Bajazet. The greater part indeed of the fable is due to his own invention. Bajazet is reckoned to fall below most of his other tragedies in beauty of style:

but the fable is well connected; there is a great deal of movement; and an unintermitting interest is sustained by Bajazet and Atalide, two of the noblest characters that Racine has drawn. Atalide has not the ingenuous simplicity of Junie, but displays a more dramatic flow of sentiment, and not less dignity or tenderness of soul. The character of Roxane is conceived with truth and spirit; nor is the resemblance some have found in it to that of Hermione greater than belongs to forms of the same type. Acomat, the vizier, is more a favorite with the French critics; but, in such parts, Racine does not rise to the level of Corneille. No poet is less exposed to the imputation of bombastic exaggeration: yet, in the two lines with which Acomat concludes the fourth act, there is at least an approach to burlesque; and one can hardly say that they would have been out of place in Tom Thumb:—

"Mourons, moi, cher Osmin, comme un vizir, et toi,  
Comme le favori d'un homme tel que moi."

10. The next tragedy was Mithridate; and, in this, Racine has been thought to have wrestled against Corneille on his own ground, the display of the unconquerable mind of a hero. Mithridate. We find in the part of Mithridate a great depth of thought, in compressed and energetic language. But, unlike the masculine characters of Corneille, he is not merely sententious. Racine introduces no one for the sake of the speeches he has to utter. In Mithridates he took what history has delivered to us, blending with it no improbable fiction according to the manners of the East. His love for Monime has nothing in it extraordinary, or unlike what we might expect from the king of Pontus; it is a fierce, a jealous, a vindictive love: the necessities of the French language alone, and the usages of the French theatre, could make it appear feeble. His two sons are naturally less effective; but the loveliness of Monime yields to no female character of Racine. There is something not quite satisfactory in the stratagems which Mithridates employs to draw from her a confession of her love for his son. They are not uncongenial to the historic character, but, according to our chivalrous standard of heroism, seem derogatory to the poetical.

11. *Iphigénie* followed in 1674. In this, Racine had again to contend with Euripides in one of his most celebrated tra



gedica. He had even, in the character of Achilles, to contend, not with Homer himself, yet with the Homeric associations familiar to every classical scholar. The love, in fact, of Achilles, and his politeness towards Clytemnestra, are not exempt from a tone of gallantry a little repugnant to our conception of his manners. Yet the Achilles of Homer is neither incapable of love nor of courtesy, so that there is no essential repugnance to his character. That of Iphigenia in Euripides has been censured by Aristotle as inconsistent; her extreme distress at the first prospect of death being followed by an unusual display of courage. Hurd has taken upon him the defence of the Greek tragedian, and observes, after Brunoy, that the Iphigenia of Racine, being modelled rather according to the comment of Aristotle than the example of Euripides, is so much the worse.<sup>1</sup> But his apology is too subtle, and requires too long reflection, for the ordinary spectator; and, though Shakspeare might have managed the transition of feeling with some of his wonderful knowledge of human nature, it is certainly presented too crudely by Euripides, and much in the style which I have elsewhere observed to be too usual with our old dramatists. The Iphigenia of Racine is not a character, like those of Shakspeare, and of him, perhaps, alone, which nothing less than intense meditation can develop to the reader, but one which a good actress might compass, and a common spectator understand. Racine, like most other tragedians, wrote for the stage: Shakspeare aimed at a point beyond it, and sometimes too much lost sight of what it required.

12. Several critics have censured the part of Eriphile. Yet Fontenelle, prejudiced as he was against Racine, admits that it is necessary for the catastrophe; though he cavils, I think, against her appearance in the earlier part of the play, laying down a rule, by which our own tragedians would not have chosen to be tried, and which seems far too rigid, that the necessity of the secondary characters should be perceived from their first appearance.<sup>2</sup> The question for Racine was, in what manner he should manage the catastrophe. The *fabulous truth*, the actual sacrifice of Iphigenia, was so revolting to the mind, that even Euripides thought himself obliged to depart from it. But this he effected by a contrivance impos-

<sup>1</sup> Hurd's Commentary on Horace, vol. i. p. 115

<sup>2</sup> Réflexions sur la Poëti que; Fontenelle, vol. iii. p. 139

sible on the French stage, and which would have changed Racine's tragedy to a common melodrame. It appears to me that he very happily substituted the character of Eriphile, who, as Fontenelle well says, is the hind of the fable; and whose impetuous and somewhat disorderly passions both furnish a contrast to the ideal nobleness of Iphigenia throughout the tragedy, and reconcile us to her own fate at the close.

13. Once more, in *Phédre*, did the great disciple of Euripides attempt to surpass his master. In both tra- *Phédre.*  
gedies, the character of Phædra herself throws into shade all the others; but with this important difference, that in Euripides her death occurs about the middle of the piece, while she continues in Racine till the conclusion. The French poet has borrowed much from the Greek, more, perhaps, than in any former drama, but has surely heightened the interest, and produced a more splendid work of genius. I have never read the particular criticism in which Schlegel has endeavored to elevate the Hippolytus above the *Phédre*. Many, even among French critics, have objected to the love of Hippolytus for Aricia, by which Racine has deviated from the older mythological tradition, though not without the authority of Virgil. But we are hardly tied to all the circumstance of fable; and the cold young huntsman loses nothing in the eyes of a modern reader by a virtuous attachment. This tragedy is said to be more open to verbal criticism than the *Iphigénie*; but in poetical beauty I do not know that Racine has ever surpassed it. The description of the death of Hippolytus is, perhaps, his masterpiece. It is true, that, according to the practice of our own stage, long descriptions, especially in elaborate language, are out of use; but it is not, at least, for the advocates of Euripides to blame them.

14. The *Phédre* was represented in 1677; and, after this, its illustrious author seemed to renounce the stage. His increasing attachment to the Jansenists made it *Esther.*  
almost impossible, with any consistency, to promote an amusement which they anathematized. But he was induced, after many years, in 1689, by Madame de Maintenon, to write *Esther* for the purpose of representation by the young ladies whose education she protected at St. Cyr. *Esther*, though very much praised for beauty of language, is admitted to possess little merit as a drama. Much, indeed, could not be expected in the circumstances. It was acted at St. Cyr:

Louis applauded, and it is said that the Prince de Conde wept. The greatest praise of Esther is, that it encouraged its author to write *Athalie*. Once more restored to *Athalie*.

dramatic conceptions, his genius revived from sleep with no loss of the vigor of yesterday. He was even more in *Athalie* than in *Iphigénie* and *Britannicus*. This great work, published in 1691, with a royal prohibition to represent it on any theatre, stands, by general consent, at the head of all the tragedies of Racine, for the grandeur, simplicity, and interest of the fable; for dramatic terror; for theatrical effect; for clear and judicious management; for bold and forcible, rather than subtle, delineation of character; for sublime sentiment and imagery. It equals, if it does not, as I should incline to think, surpass, all the rest in the perfection of style; and is far more free from every defect, especially from feeble politeness and gallantry, which of course the subject could not admit. It has been said that he himself gave the preference to *Phédre*; but it is more extraordinary that not only his enemies, of whom there were many, but the public itself, was for some years incapable of discovering the merit of *Athalie*. Boileau declared it to be a masterpiece; and one can only be astonished that any could have thought differently from Boileau. It doubtless gained much in general esteem when it came to be represented by good actors; for no tragedy in the French language is more peculiarly fitted for the stage.

15. The chorus, which he had previously introduced in *Esther*, was a very bold innovation (for the revival of what is forgotten must always be classed as innovation); and it required all the skill of Racine to prevent its appearing in our eyes an impertinent excrescence. But though we do not, perhaps, wholly reconcile ourselves to some of the songs, which too much suggest, by association, the Italian opera, the chorus of *Athalie* enhances the interest as well as the splendor of the tragedy. It was, indeed, more full of action and scenic pomp than any he had written, and probably than any other which up to that time had been represented in France. The part of *Athalie* predominates, but not so as to eclipse the rest. The high-priest Joad is drawn with a stern zeal, admirably dramatic, and without which the idolatrous queen would have trampled down all before her during the conduct of the fable, whatever justice might have ensued at the last. We feel this want of an adequate resistance to triumphant crime

in the *Rodogune* of *Corneille*. No character appears superfluous or feeble: while the plot has all the simplicity of the Greek stage, it has all the movement and continual excitation of the modern.

16. The female characters of *Racine* are of the greatest beauty: they have the ideal grace and harmony of ancient sculpture, and bear somewhat of the same analogy to those of *Shakspeare* which that art does to painting. *Andromache*, *Monimia*, *Iphigenia*, we may add *Junia*, have a dignity and faultlessness neither unnatural nor insipid, because they are only the ennobling and purifying of human passions. They are the forms of possible excellence, not from individual models, nor likely, perhaps, to delight every reader, for the same reason that more eyes are pleased by *Titian* than by *Raffaelle*. But it is a very narrow criticism which excludes either school from our admiration, which disparages *Racine* out of idolatry of *Shakspeare*. The latter, it is unnecessary for me to say, stands out of reach of all competition. But it is not on this account that we are to give up an author so admirable as *Racine*.

*Racine's*  
female  
characters.

17. The chief faults of *Racine* may partly be ascribed to the influence of national taste, though we must confess that *Corneille* has better avoided them. Though love, with the former, is always tragic and connected with the heroic passions, never appearing singly, as in several of our own dramatists, yet it is sometimes unsuitable to the character, and still more frequently feeble and courtier-like in the expression. In this he complied too much with the times; but we must believe that he did not entirely feel that he was wrong. *Corneille* had, even while *Racine* was in his glory, a strenuous band of supporters. *Fontenelle*, writing in the next century, declares that time has established a decision in which most seem to concur, that the first place is due to the elder poet, the second to the younger; every one making the interval between them a little greater or less according to his taste. But *Voltaire*, *La Harpe*, and in general, I apprehend, the later French critics, have given the preference to *Racine*. I presume to join my suffrage to theirs. *Racine* appears to me the superior tragedian; and I must add, that I think him next to *Shakspeare* among all the moderns. The comparison with *Euripides* is so natural that it can hardly be avoided. Certainly no tragedy of the Greek poet is so skil-

*Racine com-*  
pared with  
*Corneille*.



ful or so perfect as *Athalie* or *Britannicus*. The tedious scenes during which the action is stagnant, the impertinences of useless, often perverse morality, the extinction, by bad management, of the sympathy that had been raised in the earlier part of a play, the foolish alternation of repartees in a series of single lines, will never be found in Racine. But, when we look only at the highest excellences of Euripides, there is, perhaps, a depth of pathos and an intensity of dramatic effect which Racine himself has not attained. The difference between the energy and sweetness of the two languages is so important in the comparison, that I shall give even this preference with some hesitation.

18. The style of Racine is exquisite. Perhaps he is second Beauty of only to Virgil among all poets. But I will give the his style. praise of this in the words of a native critic: "His expression is always so happy and so natural, that it seems as if no other could have been found; and every word is placed in such a manner, that we cannot fancy any other place to have suited it as well. The structure of his style is such that nothing could be displaced, nothing added, nothing retrenched: it is one unalterable whole. Even his incorrectnesses are often but sacrifices required by good taste; nor would any thing be more difficult than to write over again a line of Racine. No one has enriched the language with a greater number of turns of phrase; no one is bold with more felicity and discretion, or figurative with more grace and propriety; no one has handled with more command an idiom often rebellious, or with more skill an instrument always difficult; no one has better understood that delicacy of style which must not be mistaken for feebleness, and is, in fact, but that air of ease which conceals from the reader the labor of the work and the artifices of the composition; or better managed the variety of cadences, the resources of rhythm, the association and deduction of ideas. In short, if we consider that his perfection in these respects may be opposed to that of Virgil, and that he spoke a language less flexible, less poetical, and less harmonious, we shall readily believe that Racine is, of all mankind, the one to whom nature has given the greatest talent for versification."<sup>1</sup>

19. Thomas, the younger and far inferior brother of Pierre Corneille, was yet by the fertility of his pen, by the success

<sup>1</sup> La Harpe, *Eloge de Racine*, as quoted by himself in *Cours de Littérature*, vol. vi

of some of his tragedies, and by a certain reputation which two of them have acquired, the next name, but at a vast interval, to Racine. Voltaire says he would have enjoyed a great reputation but for that of his brother; one of those pointed sayings which seem to convey something, but are really devoid of meaning. Thomas Corneille is never compared with his brother; and probably his brother has been rather serviceable to his name with posterity than otherwise. He wrote with more purity, according to the French critics; and it must be owned, that, in his *Ariane*, he has given to love a tone more passionate and natural than the main scenes of the older tragedian ever present. This is esteemed his best work; but it depends wholly on the principal character, whose tenderness and injuries excite our sympathy, and from whose lips many lines of great beauty flow. It may be compared with the *Berenice* of Racine, represented but a short time before: there is enough of resemblance in the fables to provoke comparison. That of Thomas Corneille is more tragic, less destitute of theatrical movement, and consequently better chosen; but such relative praise is of little value, where none can be given, in this respect, to the object of comparison. We feel that the prose romance is the proper sphere for the display of an affection, neither untrue to nature, nor unworthy to move the heart, but wanting the majesty of the tragic muse. An effeminate uncongenial to tragedy belongs to this play; and the termination, where the heroine faints away instead of dying, is somewhat insipid. The only other tragedy of the younger Corneille that can be mentioned is the *Earl of Essex*. In this he has taken greater liberties with history than his critics approve; and, though love does not so much predominate as in *Ariane*, it seems to engross, in a style rather too romantic, both the hero and his sovereign.

20. Neither of these tragedies, perhaps, deserves to be put on a level with the *Manlius* of La Fosse, to which La Harpe accords the preference above all of the seventeenth century after those of Corneille and Racine. It is just to observe, what is not denied, that the author has borrowed the greater part of his story from the *Venice Preserved* of Otway. The French critics maintain that he has far excelled his original. It is possible that we might hesitate to own this general superiority; but several blemishes

Thomas  
Corneille:  
his *Ariane*

*Manlius* of  
La Fosse.

have been removed, and the conduct is perhaps more noble, or at least more fitted to the French stage. But, when we take from *La Fosse* what belongs to another, — characters strongly marked, sympathies powerfully contrasted, a development of the plot probable and interesting, — what will remain that is purely his own? There will remain a vigorous tone of language, a considerable power of description, and a skill in adapting, we may add with justice, in sometimes improving, what he found in a foreign language. We must pass over some other tragedies which have obtained less honor in their native land, — those of Duché, Quinault, and Campistron.

21. Molière is perhaps, of all French writers, the one whom his country has most uniformly admired, and in whom her critics are most unwilling to acknowledge faults; though the observations of Schlegel on the defects of Molière, and especially on his large debts to older comedy, are not altogether without foundation. Molière began with *L'Etourdi* in 1653; and his pieces followed rapidly till his death in 1673. About one-half are in verse. I shall select a few, without regard to order of time; and, first, one written in prose, — *L'Avare*.

22. *Plautus* first exposed upon the stage the wretchedness of avarice, the punishment of a selfish love of gold, not only in the life of pain it has cost to acquire it, but in the terrors that it brings; in the disordered state of mind, which is haunted, as by some mysterious guilt, by the consciousness of secret wealth. The character of *Euclio* in the *Aulularia* is dramatic, and, as far as we know, original: the moral effect requires, perhaps, some touches beyond absolute probability; but it must be confessed that a few passages are over-charged. Molière borrowed *L'Avare* from this comedy; and I am not at present aware, that the subject, though so well adapted for the stage, had been chosen by any intermediate dramatist. He is indebted not merely for the scheme of his play, but for many strokes of humor, to *Plautus*. But this takes off little from the merit of this excellent comedy. The plot is expanded without incongruous or improbable circumstances; new characters are well combined with that of *Harpagon*, and his own is at once more diverting and less extravagant than that of *Euclio*. The penuriousness of the latter, though by no means without example, leaves no room for any other object than the concealed treasure, in which his

thoughts are concentrated. But Molière had conceived a more complicated action. Harpagon does not absolutely starve the rats; he possesses horses, though he feeds them ill; he has servants, though he grudges them clothes; he even contemplates a marriage-supper at his own expense, though he intends to have a bad one. He has evidently been compelled to make some sacrifices to the usages of mankind, and is at once a more common and a more theatrical character than Euclio. In other respects they are much alike: their avarice has reached that point where it is without pride; the dread of losing their wealth has overpowered the desire of being thought to possess it; and though this is a more natural incident in the manners of Greece than in those of France, yet the concealment of treasure, even in the time of Molière, was sufficiently frequent for dramatic probability. A general tone of selfishness, the usual source and necessary consequence of avarice, conspires with the latter quality to render Harpagon odious; and there wants but a little more poetical justice in the conclusion, which leaves the casket in his possession.

23. Hurd has censured Molière without much justice. "For the picture of the avaricious man, Plautus and Molière have presented us with a fantastic, unpleasing draught of the passion of avarice." It may be answered to this, that Harpagon's character is, as has been said above, not so mere a delineation of the passion as that of Euclio. But, as a more general vindication of Molière, it should be kept in mind, that every exhibition of a predominant passion within the compass of the five acts of a play must be colored beyond the truth of nature, or it will not have time to produce its effect. This is one great advantage that romance possesses over the drama.

24. *L'Ecole des Femmes* is among the most diverting comedies of Molière. Yet it has in a remarkable degree what seems inartificial to our own taste, and contravenes a good general precept of Horace: the action passes almost wholly in recital. But this is so well connected with the development of the plot and characters, and produces such amusing scenes, that no spectator, at least on the French theatre, would be sensible of any languor. Arnolphe is an excellent modification of the type which Molière loved to reproduce, — the selfish and morose cynic, whose pretended hatred of the vices of the world springs from an absorbing regard to his own gratification. He has made him as malign-

*L'Ecole des  
Femmes.*



nant as censorious; he delights in tales of scandal; he is pleased that Horace should be successful in gallantry, because it degrades others. The half-witted and ill-bred child, of whom he becomes the dupe, as well as the two idiot servants, are delineated with equal vivacity. In this comedy we find the spirited versification, full of grace and humor, in which no one has rivalled Molière, and which has never been attempted on the English stage. It was probably its merit which raised a host of petty detractors, on whom the author revenged himself in his admirable piece of satire, *La Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes*. The affected pedantry of the *Hôtel Rambouillet* seems to be ridiculed in this retaliation: nothing, in fact, could be more unlike than the style of Molière to their own.

25. He gave another proof of contempt for the false taste of some Parisian circles, in the *Misanthrope*; though the criticism of Alceste on the wretched sonnet forms but a subordinate portion of that famous comedy. It is generally placed next to *Tartuffe* among the works of Molière. Alceste is again the cynic, but more honorable and less openly selfish, and with more of a real disdain of vice in his misanthropy. Rousseau, upon this account, and many others after him, have treated the play as a vindication of insincerity against truth, and as making virtue itself ridiculous on the stage. This charge, however, seems uncandid: neither the rudeness of Alceste, nor the misanthropy from which it springs, are to be called virtues; and we may observe that he displays no positively good quality beyond sincerity, unless his ungrounded and improbable love for a coquette is to pass for such. It is true that the politeness of Philinthe, with whom the *Misanthrope* is contrasted, borders a little too closely upon flattery: but no oblique end is in his view; he flatters to give pleasure; and, if we do not esteem his character, we are not solicitous for his punishment. The dialogue of the *Misanthrope* is uniformly of the highest style; the female, and indeed all the characters, are excellently conceived and sustained: if this comedy fails of any thing at present, it is through the difference of manners, and perhaps, in representation, through the want of animated action on the stage.

26. In *Les Femmes Savantes*, there is a more evident personality in the characters, and a more malicious exposure of absurdity, than in the *Misanthrope*; but the ridicule, fall-

ing on a less numerous class, is not so well calculated to be appreciated by posterity. It is, however, both in <sup>Les Femmes Savantes.</sup> reading and representation, a more amusing comedy: in no one instance has Molière delineated such variety of manners, or displayed so much of his inimitable gayety, and power of fascinating the audience with very little plot, by the mere exhibition of human follies. The satire falls deservedly on pretenders to taste and literature, for whom Molière always testifies a bitterness of scorn in which we perceive some resentment of their criticisms. The shorter piece, entitled *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, is another shaft directed at the literary ladies of Paris. They had provoked a dangerous enemy; but the good taste of the next age might be ascribed in great measure to his unmerciful exposure of affectation and pedantry.

27. It was not easy, so late as the age of Molière, for the dramatist to find any untrodden field in the follies <sup>Tartuffe.</sup> and vices of mankind. But one had been reserved for him in Tartuffe, — religious hypocrisy. We should have expected the original draft of such a character on the English stage; nor had our old writers been forgetful of their inveterate enemies, the Puritans, who gave such full scope for their satire. But, choosing rather the easy path of ridicule, they fell upon the starch dresses and quaint language of the fanatical party; and, where they exhibited these in conjunction with hypocrisy, made the latter more ludicrous than hateful. The Luke of Massinger is deeply and villanously dissembling, but does not wear so conspicuous a garb of religious sanctity as Tartuffe. The comedy of Molière is not only original in this character, but is a new creation in dramatic poetry. It has been doubted by some critics, whether the depth of guilt that it exhibits, the serious hatred that it inspires, are not beyond the strict province of comedy. But this seems rather a technical cavil. If subjects such as the Tartuffe are not fit for comedy, they are at least fit for dramatic representation; and some new phrase must be invented to describe their class.

28. A different kind of objection is still sometimes made to this play, that it brings religion itself into suspicion. And this would no doubt have been the case, if the contemporaries of Molière in England had dealt with the subject. But the boundaries between the reality and its false appearances are

so well guarded in this comedy, that no reasonable ground of exception can be thought to remain. No better advice can be given to those who take umbrage at the *Tartuffe* than to read it again. For there may be good reason to suspect that they are themselves among those for whose benefit it was intended: the *Tartuffes*, happily, may be comparatively few; but, while the *Orgons* and *Pernelles* are numerous, they will not want their harvest. Molière did not invent the prototypes of his hypocrite: they were abundant at Paris in his time.

29. The interest of this play continually increases; and the fifth act is almost crowded by a rapidity of events, not so usual on the French stage as our own. *Tartuffe* himself is a masterpiece of skill. Perhaps in the cavils of *La Bruyère* there may be some justice; but the essayist has forgotten that no character can be rendered entirely effective to an audience without a little exaggeration of its attributes. Nothing can be more happily conceived than the credulity of the honest *Orgon*, and his more doting mother: it is that which we sometimes witness, incurable except by the evidence of the senses, and fighting every inch of ground against that. In such a subject, there was not much opportunity for the comic talent of Molière; yet, in some well-known passages, he has enlivened it as far as was possible. The *Tartuffe* will generally be esteemed the greatest effort of this author's genius: the *Misanthrope*, the *Femmes Savantes*, and the *Ecole des Femmes*, will follow in various order, according to our tastes. These are by far the best of his comedies in verse. Among those in prose, we may give the first place to *L'Avare*, and the next either to *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, or to *George Dandin*.

30. These two plays have the same objects of moral satire: on one hand, the absurd vanity of plebeians in seeking the alliance or acquaintance of the nobility; on the other, the pride and meanness of the nobility themselves. They are both abundantly diverting; but the sallies of humor are, I think, more frequent in the first three acts of the former. The last two acts are improbable and less amusing. The shorter pieces of Molière border very much upon farce: he permits himself more vulgarity of character, more grossness in language and incident; but his farces are seldom absurd, and never dull.

*Bourgeois  
Gentil-  
homme.  
George  
Dandin.*

31. The French have claimed for Molière, and few perhaps have disputed the pretension, a superiority over all earlier and later writers of comedy. He certainly leaves Plautus, the original model of the school to which he belonged, at a vast distance. The grace and gentlemanly elegance of Terence he has not equalled; but in the more appropriate merits of comedy, just and forcible delineation of character, skilful contrivance of circumstances, and humorous dialogue, we must award him the prize. The Italian and Spanish dramatists are quite unworthy to be named in comparison; and if the French theatre has in later times, as is certainly the case, produced some excellent comedies, we have, I believe, no reason to contradict the suffrage of the nation itself, that they owe almost as much to what they have caught from this great model as to the natural genius of their authors. But it is not for us to abandon the rights of Shakspeare. In all things most essential to comedy, we cannot acknowledge his inferiority to Molière. He had far more invention of characters, with an equal vivacity and force in their delineation. His humor was at least as abundant and natural, his wit incomparably more brilliant; in fact, Molière hardly exhibits this quality at all.<sup>1</sup> The *Merry Wives of Windsor*, almost the only pure comedy of Shakspeare, is surely not disadvantageously compared with *George Dandin* or *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, or even with *L'Ecole des Femmes*. For the *Tartuffe* or the *Misanthrope* it is vain to seek a proper counterpart in Shakspeare: they belong to a different state of manners. But the powers of Molière are directed with greater skill to their object: none of his energy is wasted; the spectator is not interrupted by the serious scenes of tragi-comedy, nor his attention drawn aside by poetical episodes. Of Shakspeare we may justly say, that he had the greater genius; but perhaps of Molière, that he has written the best comedies. We cannot at least put any third dramatist in competition with him. Fletcher and Jonson, Wycherley and Congreve, Farquhar and Sheridan, with great excellences of their own, fall short of his merit as well as of his fame. Yet, in humorous conception, our admirable *Provoked Husband*, the best parts of which

<sup>1</sup> [A French critic upon the first edition of this work has supposed it to be the same as *esprit*, and is justly astonished that I should say Molière, especially have been passing]



Vanbrugh, seems to be equal to any thing he has left. His spirited and easy versification stands, of course, untouched by any English rivalry: we may have been wise in rejecting verse from our stage: but we have certainly given the French a right to claim all the honor that belongs to it.

32. Racine once only attempted comedy. His wit was quick and sarcastic; and in epigram he did not spare his enemies. In his *Plaideurs* there is more of humor and stage-effect than of wit. The ridicule falls happily on the pedantry of lawyers and the folly of suitors; but the technical language is lost in great measure upon the audience. This comedy, if it be not rather a farce, is taken from *The Wasps* of Aristophanes; and that Rabelais of antiquity supplied an extravagance very improbably introduced into the third act of *Les Plaideurs*, the trial of the dog. Far from improving the humor, which had been amusingly kept up during the first two acts, this degenerates into absurdity.

33. Regnard is always placed next to Molière among the comic writers of France in this, and perhaps in any age. The plays, indeed, which entitle him to such a rank, are but few. Of these the best is acknowledged to be *Le Joueur*. Regnard, taught by his own experience, has here admirably delineated the character of an inveterate gamester: without parade of morality, few comedies are more usefully moral. We have not the struggling virtues of a Charles Surface, which the dramatist may feign that he may reward at the fifth act: Regnard has better painted the selfish, ungrateful being, who, though not incapable of love, pawns his mistress's picture, the instant after she has given it to him, that he may return to the dice-box. Her just abandonment, and his own disgrace, terminate the comedy with a moral dignity which the stage does not always maintain, and which, in the first acts, the spectator does not expect. The other characters seem to me various, spirited, and humorous: the valet of Valère the gamester is one of the best of that numerous class, to whom comedy has owed so much; but the pretended marquis, though diverting, talks too much like a genuine coxcomb of the world. Molière did this better in *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. Regnard is in this play full of those gay sallies which cannot be read without laughter; the incidents follow rapidly; there is more movement than in some

*Les Plaideurs* of Racine.

Regnard: *Le Joueur*.

of the best of Molière's comedies, and the speeches are not so prolix.

34. Next to *Le Joueur* among Regnard's comedies, it has been usual to place *Le Légataire*, not by any means inferior to the first in humor and vivacity, but with less force of character, and more of the common tricks of the stage. The moral, instead of being excellent, is of the worst kind; being the success and dramatic reward of a gross fraud,—the forgery of a will by the hero of the piece and his servant. This servant is, however, a very comical rogue; and we should not, perhaps, wish to see him sent to the galleys. A similar censure might be passed on the comedy of Regnard which stands third in reputation,—*Les Ménechmes*. The subject, as explained by the title, is old,—twin-brothers, whose undistinguishable features are the source of endless confusion; but, what neither Plautus nor Shakespeare have thought of, one avails himself of the likeness to receive a large sum of money due to the other, and is thought very generous at the close of the play when he restores a moiety. Of the plays founded on this diverting exaggeration, Regnard's is, perhaps, the best: he has more variety of incident than Plautus; and by leaving out the second pair of twins, the Dromio servants, who render the Comedy of Errors almost too inextricably confused for the spectator or reader, as well as by making one of the brothers aware of the mistake, and a party in the deception, he has given an unity of plot instead of a series of incoherent blunders.

35. The *Mère Coquette* of Quinault appears a comedy of great merit. Without the fine traits of nature which we find in those of Molière, without the sallies of humor which enliven those of Regnard, with a versification perhaps not very forcible, it pleases us by a fable at once novel, as far as I know, and natural, by the interesting characters of the lovers, by the decency and tone of good company, which are never lost in the manners, the incidents, or the language. Boursault, whose tragedies are little esteemed, displayed some originality in *Le Mercure Galant*. The idea is one which has not unfrequently been imitated on the English as well as French stage; but it is rather adapted to the shorter drama than to a regular comedy of five acts. The *Mercury Galant* was a famous magazine of light periodical amusement, such as was then new in France, which had a

great sale, and is described in a few lines by one of the characters in this piece.<sup>1</sup> Boursault places his hero, by the editor's consent, as a temporary substitute in the office of this publication; and brings, in a series of detached scenes, a variety of applicants for his notice. A comedy of this kind is like a compound animal: a few chief characters must give unity to the whole; but the effect is produced by the successive personages who pass over the stage, display their humor in a single scene, and disappear. Boursault has been in some instances successful; but such pieces generally owe too much to temporary sources of amusement.

36. Dancourt, as Voltaire has said, holds the same rank relatively to Molière in farce that Regnard does in the higher comedy. He came a little after the former, and when the prejudice that had been created against comedies in prose by the great success of the other kind had begun to subside. The *Chevalier à la Mode* is the only play of Dancourt that I know: it is much above farce; and, if length be a distinctive criterion, it exceeds most comedies. This would be very slight praise, if we could not add, that the reader does not find it one page too long; that the ridicule is poignant and happy, the incidents well contrived, the comic situations amusing, the characters clearly marked. La Harpe, who treats Dancourt with a sort of contempt, does not so much as mention this play. It is a satire on the pretensions of a class then rising, the rich financiers, which long supplied materials, through dramatic caricature, to public malignity, and the envy of a less opulent aristocracy.

37. The life of Brueys is rather singular. Born of a noble Huguenot family, he was early devoted to Protestant theology, and even presumed to enter the lists against Bossuet. But that champion of the faith was like one of those knights in romance who first unhorse their rash antagonists, and then make them work as slaves. Brueys was soon converted, and betook himself to write against his former errors. He afterwards became an ecclesiastic. Thus far, there is nothing much out of the common course in his

<sup>1</sup> "Le Mercure est une bonne chose; On y trouve de tout, fable, histoire, vers, prose, Sièges, combats, procès, mort, mariage, <sup>ROMANESQUE</sup> nouvelles de province, et nouvelles de cour —

Jamais livre à mon gré ne fut plus nécessaire." Act I. scene 2.

The *Mercurie Galant* was established in 1672 by one Visé: it was forced to fill the same place as a critical record of public literature which the *Journal des Savans* did in learning and science.

history. But, grown weary of living alone, and having some natural turn to comedy, he began, rather late, to write for the stage, with the assistance, or perhaps only under the name, of a certain Palaprat. The plays of Brueys had some success: but he was not in a position to delineate recent manners; and in the only comedy with which I am acquainted, *Le Muet*, he has borrowed the leading part of his story from Terence. The language seems deficient in vivacity, which, when there is no great naturalness or originality of character, cannot be dispensed with.

38. The French opera, after some ineffectual attempts by Mazarin to naturalize an Italian company, was successfully established by Lulli in 1672. It is the prerogative of music in the melodrame to render poetry its dependent ally; but the airs of Lulli have been forgotten, and the verses of his coadjutor Quinault remain. He is not only the earliest, but, by general consent, the unrivalled, poet of French music. Boileau, indeed, treated him with undeserved scorn, but probably through dislike of the tone he was obliged to preserve, which in the eyes of so stern a judge, and one so insensible to love, appeared languid and effeminate. Quinault, nevertheless, was not incapable of vigorous and impressive poetry; a lyric grandeur distinguishes some of his songs; he seems to possess great felicity of adorning every subject with appropriate imagery and sentiment; his versification has a smoothness, and charm of melody, which has made some say that the lines were already music before they came to the composer's hands; his fables, whether taken from mythology or modern romance, display invention and skill. Voltaire, La Harpe, Schlegel, and the author of the *Life of Quinault* in the *Biographie Universelle*, but, most of all, the testimony of the public, have compensated for the severity of Boileau. The *Armide* is Quinault's latest and also his finest opera.

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## SECT. II.—ON THE ENGLISH DRAMA.

*State of the Stage after the Restoration—Tragedies of Dryden, Otway, Southern—Comedies of Congreve and others.*

39. THE troubles of twenty years, and, much more, the fanatical antipathy to stage-plays which the predominant party



affected, silenced the muse of the buskin, and broke the continuity of those works of the elder dramatists, which had given a tone to public sentiment as to the drama from the middle of Elizabeth's reign. Davenant had, by a sort of connivance, opened a small house for the representation of plays, though not avowedly so called, near the Charter House, in 1656. He obtained a patent after the Restoration. By this time another generation had arisen, and the scale of taste was to be adjusted anew. The fondness for the theatre revived with increased avidity: more splendid decoration; actors probably, especially Betterton, of greater powers; and, above all, the attraction of female performers, who had never been admitted on the older stage,—conspired with the keen appetite that long restraint produced, and with the general gayety, or rather dissoluteness, of manners. Yet the multitude of places for such amusement was not as great as under the first Stuarts. Two houses only were opened under royal patents, granting them an exclusive privilege: one by what was called the King's Company, in Drury Lane; another by the Duke of York's Company, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Betterton, who was called the English Roscius, till Garrick claimed that title, was sent to Paris by Charles II., that, taking a view of the French stage, he might better judge of what would contribute to the improvement of our own. It has been said, and probably with truth, that he introduced movable scenes, instead of the fixed tapestry that had been hung across the stage; but this improvement he could not have borrowed from France. The king not only countenanced the theatre by his patronage, but by so much personal notice of the chief actors, and so much interest in all the affairs of the theatre, as elevated their condition.

40. An actor of great talents is the best friend of the great dramatists: his own genius demands theirs for its support and display; and a fine performer would as soon waste the powers of his hand on feeble music, as a man like Betterton or Garrick represent what is insipid or in bad taste. We know that the former, and some of his contemporaries, were celebrated in the great parts of our early stage, in those of Shakspeare and Fletcher. But the change of public taste is sometimes irresistible by those who, as, in Johnson's antithesis, they "live to please, must please to live." Neither tragedy nor comedy was maintained at its

Revival of  
the English  
theatre.

Change of  
public  
taste.

proper level; and, as the world is apt to demand novelty on the stage, the general tone of dramatic representation in this period, whatever credit it may have done to the performers, reflects little, in comparison with our golden age, upon those who wrote for them.

41. It is observed by Scott, that the French theatre, which was now thought to be in perfection, guided the criticism of Charles's court, and afforded the pattern of Its causes those tragedies which continued in fashion for twenty years after the Restoration, and which were called rhyming or heroic plays. Though there is a general justice in this remark, I am not aware that the inflated tone of these plays is imitated from any French tragedy: certainly there was a nobler model in the best works of Corneille. But Scott is more right in deriving the unnatural and pedantic dialogue which prevailed through these performances from the romances of Scudery and Calprenède. These were, about the era of the Restoration, almost as popular among our indolent gentry as in France; and it was to be expected that a style would gain ground in tragedy, which is not so widely removed from what tragedy requires, but that an ordinary audience would fail to perceive the difference. There is but a narrow line between the sublime and the tumid: the man of business or of pleasure who frequents the theatre must have accustomed himself to make such large allowances, to put himself into a state of mind so totally different from his every-day habits, that a little extraordinary deviation from nature, far from shocking him, will rather show like a further advance towards excellence. Hotspur and Almanzor, Richard and Aurungzebe, seem to him cast in the same mould; beings who can never occur in the common walks of life, but whom the tragedian has, by a tacit convention with the audience, acquired a right of feigning like his ghosts and witches.

42. The first tragedies of Dryden were what was called heroic, and written in rhyme; an innovation which, of course, must be ascribed to the influence of the Heroic tragedies of Dryden. French theatre. They have occasionally much vigor of sentiment and much beautiful poetry, with a versification sweet even to lusciousness. The Conquest of Grenada is, on account of its extravagance, the most celebrated of these plays; but it is inferior to the Indian Emperor, from which it would be easy to select passages of perfect elegance. It is

singular, that, although the rhythm of dramatic verse is commonly permitted to be the most lax of any, Dryden has in this play availed himself of none of his wonted privileges. He regularly closes the sense with the couplet, and falls into a smoothness of cadence, which, though exquisitely mellifluous, is perhaps too uniform. In the *Conquest of Grenada*, the versification is rather more broken.

43. Dryden may probably have been fond of this species of <sup>the later</sup> tragedy, on account of his own facility in rhyming, <sup>tragedies.</sup> and his habit of condensing his sense. Rhyme, indeed, can only be rejected in our language from the tragic scene, because blank verse affords wider scope for the emotions it ought to excite; but, for the tumid rhapsodies which the personages of his heroic plays utter, there can be no excuse. He adhered to this tone, however, till the change in public taste, and especially the ridicule thrown on his own plays by the *Rehearsal*, drove him to adopt a very different, though not altogether faultless, style of tragedy. His principal works of this latter class are, *All for Love*, in 1678; the *Spanish Friar*, commonly referred to 1682; and *Don Sebastian*, in 1690. Upon these the dramatic fame of Dryden is built; while the rants of *Almanzor* and *Maximin* are never mentioned but in ridicule. The chief excellence of the first tragedy appears to consist in the beauty of the language, that of the second in the interest of the story, and that of the third in the highly finished character of *Dorax*. *Dorax* is the best of Dryden's tragic characters, and perhaps the only one in which he has applied his great knowledge of the human mind to actual delineation. It is highly dramatic, because formed of those complex passions which may readily lead either to virtue or to vice, and which the poet can manage so as to surprise the spectator without transgressing consistency. The *Zanga of Young*, a part of some theatrical effect, has been compounded of this character, and of that of *Iago*.

Don Sebastian. But *Don Sebastian* is as imperfect as all plays must be in which a single personage is thrown forward in too strong relief for the rest. The language is full of that rant which characterized Dryden's earlier tragedies, and to which a natural predilection seems, after some interval, to have brought him back. *Sebastian* himself may seem to have been intended as a contrast to *Muley Molock*; but, if the author had any rule to distinguish the blustering of the hero from

that of the tyrant, he has not left the use of it in his reader's hands. The plot of this tragedy is ill conducted, especially in the fifth act. Perhaps the delicacy of the present age may have been too fastidious in excluding altogether from the drama this class of fables; because they may often excite great interest, give scope to impassioned poetry, and are admirably calculated for the *ἀναγνώρισις*, or discovery, which is so much dwelt upon by the critics: nor can the story of *Œdipus*, which has furnished one of the finest and most artful tragedies ever written, be well thought an improper subject even for representation. But they require, of all others, to be dexterously managed: they may make the main distress of a tragedy, but not an episode in it. Our feelings revolt at seeing, as in *Don Sebastian*, an incestuous passion brought forward as the make-weight of a plot, to eke out a fifth act, and to dispose of those characters whose fortune the main story has not quite wound up.

44. The Spanish Friar has been praised for what Johnson calls the "happy coincidence and coalition of the two <sup>Spanish</sup> plots." It is difficult to understand what can be <sup>Friar.</sup> meant by a compliment which seems either ironical or ignorant. Nothing can be more remote from the truth. The artifice of combining two distinct stories on the stage is, we may suppose, either to interweave the incidents of one into those of the other, or, at least, so to connect some characters with each intrigue, as to make the spectator fancy them less distinct than they are. Thus, in the *Merchant of Venice*, the courtship of Bassanio and Portia is happily connected with the main plot of Antonio and Shylock by two circumstances: it is to set Bassanio forward in his suit that the fatal bond is first given; and it is by Portia's address that its forfeiture is explained away. The same play affords an instance of another kind of underplot, that of Lorenzo and Jessica, which is more episodical, and might perhaps be removed without any material loss to the fable; though even this serves to account for, we do not say to palliate, the vindictive exasperation of the Jew. But to which of these do the comic scenes in the Spanish Friar bear most resemblance? Certainly to the latter. They consist entirely of an intrigue which Lorenzo, a young officer, carries on with a rich usurer's wife; but there is not, even by accident, any relation between his adventures and the love and murder which go forward in the



palace. The Spanish Friar, so far as it is a comedy, is reckoned the best performance of Dryden in that line. Father Dominic is very amusing, and has been copied very freely by succeeding dramatists, especially in the *Diuenna*. But Dryden has no great abundance of wit in this or any of his comedies. His jests are practical, and he seems to have written more for the eye than the ear. It may be noted as a proof of this, that his stage-directions are unusually full. In point of diction, the Spanish Friar in its tragic scenes, and *All for Love*, are certainly the best plays of Dryden. They are the least infected with his great fault, bombast; and should perhaps be read over and over by those who would learn the true tone of English tragedy. In dignity, in animation, in striking images and figures, there are few or none that excel them: the power indeed of impressing sympathy, or commanding tears, was seldom placed by nature within the reach of Dryden.

45. The Orphan of Otway, and his Venice Preserved, will generally be reckoned the best tragedies of this period. They have both a deep pathos, springing from the intense and unmerited distress of women; both, especially the latter, have a dramatic eloquence, rapid and flowing, with less of turgid extravagance than we find in Otway's contemporaries, and sometimes with very graceful poetry. The story of the Orphan is domestic, and borrowed, as I believe, from some French novel, though I do not at present remember where I have read it: it was once popular on the stage, and gave scope for good acting, but is displeasing to the delicacy of our own age. Venice Preserved is more frequently represented than any tragedy after those of Shakspeare; the plot is highly dramatic in conception and conduct: even what seems, when we read it, a defect,—the shifting of our wishes, or perhaps rather of our ill wishes, between two parties, the senate and the conspirators, who are redeemed by no virtue,—does not, as is shown by experience, interfere with the spectator's interest. Pierre, indeed, is one of those villains for whom it is easy to excite the sympathy of the half-principled and the inconsiderate. But the great attraction is in the character of Belvidera; and, when that part is represented by such as we remember to have seen, no tragedy is honored by such a tribute, not of tears alone, but of more agony than many would seek to endure. The versification of Otway, like

that of most in this period, runs, almost to an excess, into the line of eleven syllables; sometimes also into the *sdrucchiolo* form, or twelve syllables with a dactylic close. These give a considerable animation to tragic verse.

46. Southern's *Fatal Discovery*, latterly represented under the name of *Isabella*, is almost as familiar to the Southern. lovers of our theatre as *Venice Preserved* itself; and for the same reason, — that, whenever an actress of great tragic powers arises, the part of *Isabella* is as fitted to exhibit them as that of *Belvidera*. The choice and conduct of the story are, however, Southern's chief merits; for there is little vigor in the language, though it is natural, and free from the usual faults of his age. A similar character may be given to his other tragedy, *Oroonoko*; in which Southern deserves the praise of having, first of any English writer, denounced the traffic in slaves, and the cruelties of their West-Indian bondage. The moral feeling is high in this tragedy, and it has sometimes been acted with a certain success; but the execution is not that of a superior dramatist. Of Lee Lee. nothing need be said, but that he is, in spite of his proverbial extravagance, a man of poetical mind and some dramatic skill. But he has violated historic truth in *Theodosius*, without gaining much by invention. The *Mourning Bride* of Congreve is written in prolix declamation, Congreve. with no power over the passions. Johnson is well known to have praised a few lines in this tragedy as among the finest descriptions in the language; while others, by a sort of contrariety, have spoken of them as worth nothing. Truth is in its usual middle path: many better passages may be found; but they are well written and impressive.<sup>1</sup>

47. In the early English comedy, we find a large intermixture of obscenity in the lower characters, nor always Comedies of  
Charles  
II.'s reign. confined to them, with no infrequent scenes of licentious incident and language. But these are invariably so brought forward as to manifest the dramatist's scorn of vice, and to excite no other sentiment in a spectator of even an ordinary degree of moral purity. In the plays that appeared after the Restoration, and that from the beginning, a different tone was assumed. Vice was in her full career on the stage, unchecked by reproof, unshamed by contrast, and, for the most part, unpunished by mortification at the close

<sup>1</sup> *Mourning Bride*, act ii. scene 3; Johnson's *Life of Congreve*

Nor are these less coarse in expression, or less impudent in their delineation of low debauchery, than those of the preceding period. It may be observed, on the contrary, that they rarely exhibit the manners of truly polished life, according to any notions we can frame of them; and are, in this respect, much below those of Fletcher, Massinger, and Shirley. It might not be easy, perhaps, to find a scene in any comedy of Charles II.'s reign where one character has the behavior of a gentleman, in the sense which we attach to the word. Yet the authors of these were themselves in the world, and sometimes men of family and considerable station. The cause must be found in the state of society itself, debased as well as corrupted; partly by the example of the court; partly by the practice of living in taverns, which became much more inveterate after the Restoration than before. The contrast with the manners of Paris, as far as the stage is their mirror, does not tell to our advantage. These plays, as it may be expected, do not aim at the higher glories of comic writing: they display no knowledge of nature, nor often rise to any other conception of character than is gained by a caricature of some known class, or perhaps of some remarkable individual. Nor do they in general deserve much credit as comedies of intrigue: the plot is seldom invented with much care for its development; and if scenes follow one another in a series of diverting incidents, if the entanglements are such as produce laughter, above all, if the personages keep up a well-sustained battle of repartee, the purpose is sufficiently answered. It is in this that they often excel: some of them have considerable humor in the representation of character, though this may not be very original; and a good deal of wit in their dialogue.

48. Wycherley is remembered for two comedies, the *Plain Dealer* and the *Country Wife*; the latter represented Wycherley.

with some change, in modern times, under the name of the *Country Girl*. The former has been frequently said to be taken from the *Misanthrope* of Molière; but this, like many current assertions, seems to have little if any foundation. Manly, the *Plain Dealer*, is, like *Alceste*, a speaker of truth; but the idea is at least one which it was easy to conceive without plagiarism, and there is not the slightest resemblance in any circumstance or scene of the two comedies. We cannot say the same of the *Country Wife*; it was evidently suggested by *L'Ecole des Femmes*: the character

of Arnolphe has been copied; but even here the whole conduct of the piece of Wycherley is his own. It is more artificial than that of Molière, wherein too much passes in description; the part of Agnes is rendered still more poignant; and, among the comedies of Charles's reign, I am not sure that it is surpassed by any.

49. Shadwell and Etherege, and the famous Afra Behn, have endeavored to make the stage as grossly immoral as their talents permitted; but the two former, especially Shadwell, are not destitute of humor. At the death of Charles, it had reached the lowest point: after the Revolution, it became not much more a school of virtue, but rather a better one of polished manners, than before; and certainly drew to its service some men of comic genius whose names are now not only very familiar to our ears, as the boasts of our theatre, but whose works have not all ceased to enliven its walls.

Improvement after the Revolution.

50. Congreve, by the Old Bachelor, written, as some have said, at twenty-one years of age, but in fact not quite so soon, and represented in 1693, placed himself at once in a rank which he has always retained. Though not, I think, the first, he is undeniably among the first names. The Old Bachelor was quickly followed by the Double Dealer, and that by Love for Love, in which he reached the summit of his reputation. The last of his four comedies, the Way of the World, is said to have been coldly received; for which it is hard to assign any substantial cause, unless it be some want of sequence in the plot. The peculiar excellence of Congreve is his wit, incessantly sparkling from the lips of almost every character; but on this account it is accompanied by want of nature and simplicity. Nature, indeed, and simplicity do not belong as proper attributes to that comedy which, itself the creature of an artificial society, has for its proper business to exaggerate the affectation and hollowness of the world. A critical code which should require the comedy of polite life to be natural would make it intolerable. But there are limits of deviation from likeness, which even caricature must not transgress; and the type of truth should always regulate the playful aberrations of an inventive pencil. The manners of Congreve's comedies are not, to us at least, like those of reality: I am not sure that we have any cause to suppose that they much better represent the times

Congreve



in which they appeared. His characters, with an exception or two, are heartless and vicious; which, on being attacked by Collier, he justified, probably by an afterthought, on the authority of Aristotle's definition of comedy; that it is *μίμησις φαυλοτέρων*, an imitation of what is the worse in human nature.<sup>1</sup> But it must be acknowledged, that, more than any preceding writer among us, he kept up the tone of a gentleman; his men of the world are profligate, but not coarse; he rarely, like Shadwell, or even Dryden, caters for the populace of the theatre by such indecencies as they must understand; he gave, in fact, a tone of refinement to the public taste, which it never lost, and which, in its progression, has almost banished his own comedies from the stage.

51. Love for Love is generally reputed the best of these. Love for Love. Congreve has never any great success in the conception or management of his plot; but in this comedy there is least to censure: several of the characters are exceedingly humorous; the incidents are numerous and not complex; the wit is often admirable. Angelica and Miss Prue, Ben and Tattle, have been repeatedly imitated; but they have, I think, a considerable degree of dramatic originality in themselves. Johnson has observed, that "Ben the sailor is not reckoned over-natural, but he is very diverting." Possibly he may be quite as natural a portrait of a mere sailor as that to which we have become used in modern comedy.

52. His other comedies. The Way of the World I should perhaps incline to place next to this: the coquetry of Millamant, not without some touches of delicacy and affection, the impertinent coxcombry of Petulant and Witwood, the mixture of wit and ridiculous vanity in Lady Wishfort, are amusing to the reader. Congreve has here made more use than, as far as I remember, had been common in England, of the all-important soubrette, on whom so much depends in French comedy. The manners of France happily enabled her dramatists to improve what they had borrowed with signal success from the ancient stage, — the witty and artful servant, faithful to his master while he deceives every one besides, — by adding this female attendant, not less versed in every artifice, nor less quick in repartee. Mincing and Foible, in this play of Congreve, are good specimens of the class; but, speaking

<sup>1</sup> Congreve's Amendments of Mr. Collier's false citations.

with some hesitation, I do not think they will be found, at least not so naturally drawn, in the comedies of Charles's time. Many would, perhaps not without cause, prefer the *Old Bachelor*, which abounds with wit, but seems rather deficient in originality of character and circumstance. The *Double Dealer* is entitled to the same praise of wit; and some of the characters, though rather exaggerated, are amusing: but the plot is so entangled towards the conclusion, that I have found it difficult, even in reading, to comprehend it.

53. Congreve is not superior to Farquhar and Vanbrugh, if we might compare the whole of their works. Farquhar; Never has he equalled in vivacity, in originality of contrivance, or in clear and rapid development of intrigue, the *Beaux' Stratagem* of the one, and much less the admirable delineation of the *Wronghead* family in the *Provoked Husband* of the other. But these were of the eighteenth century. Farquhar's *Trip to the Jubilee*, though once a popular comedy, is not distinguished by more than an easy flow of wit, and perhaps a little novelty in some of the characters: it is indeed written in much superior language to the plays anterior to the Revolution. But the *Relapse* and the *Provoked Wife* of Vanbrugh have attained a considerable reputation. In the former, the character of Amanda is interesting, especially in the momentary wavering and quick recovery of her virtue. This is the first homage that the theatre had paid, since the Restoration, to female chastity; and notwithstanding the vicious tone of the other characters, in which Vanbrugh has gone as great lengths as any of his contemporaries, we perceive the beginnings of a re-action in public spirit, which gradually reformed and elevated the moral standard of the stage.<sup>1</sup> The *Provoked Wife*, though it cannot be said to give any proofs of this sort of improvement, has some merit as a comedy; it is witty and animated, as Vanbrugh usually was; the character of Sir John Brute may not have been too great a caricature of real manners, such as survived from the debased reign of Charles; and the endeavor to expose the grossness of the older generation was itself an evidence, that a better polish had been given to social life.

<sup>1</sup> This purification of English comedy has sometimes been attributed to the effects of a famous essay by Collier on the immorality of the English stage. But if public opinion had not been prepared to go along, in a considerable degree, with Collier, his animadversions could have produced little change. In point of fact, the subsequent improvement was but slow, and for some years rather shown in

## CHAPTER VII.

## HISTORY OF POLITE LITERATURE IN PROSE FROM 1650 TO 1700.

## SECTION I.

Italy — High Refinement of French Language — Fontenelle — St. Evremont — Sévigné — Bouhours and Rapin — Miscellaneous Writers — English Style and Criticism — Dryden.

1. IF Italy could furnish no long list of conspicuous names in this department of literature to our last period, she is far more deficient in the present. The Prose in Italy. Florentine of Dati, a collection of what seemed the best specimens of Italian eloquence in this century, served chiefly to prove its mediocrity; nor has that editor, by his own panegyric on Louis XIV. or any other of his writings, been able to redeem its name.<sup>1</sup> The sermons of Segneri have already been mentioned: the eulogies bestowed on them seem to be founded, in some measure, on the surrounding barrenness. The letters of Magalotti, and still more of Redi, themselves philosophers, and generally writing on philosophy, seem to do more credit than any thing else to this period.<sup>2</sup>

2. Crescimbeni, the founder of the Arcadian Society, has made an honorable name by his exertions to purify the national taste, as well as by his diligence in preserving the memory of better ages than his own. His History of National Poetry is a laborious and useful work, to which I have sometimes been indebted. His treatise on the beauty of that poetry is only known to me through Salfi. It is written in dialogue, the speakers being Arcadians. Anxious to extir-

avoiding coarse indecencies than in much elevation of sentiment. Steele's *Conscious Lovers* is the first comedy which can be called moral; Cibber, in those parts of the *Provoked Husband* that he wrote, carried this farther; and the stage afterwards grew more and more refined, till it became languid and sentimental.

<sup>1</sup> Salfi, xiv. 25; Tiraboschi, xi. 412.

<sup>2</sup> Salfi, xiv. 17; Corniani, viii. 71.

pate the school of the Marinists, without falling back altogether into that of Petrarch, he set up Costanzo as a model of poetry. Most of his precepts, Salfi observes, are very trivial at present; but, at the epoch of its appearance, his work was of great service towards the reform of Italian literature.<sup>1</sup>

3. This period, the second part of the seventeenth century, comprehends the most considerable, and in every sense the most important and distinguished, portion of what was once called the great age in France,—the reign of Louis XIV. In this period, the literature of France was adorned by its most brilliant writers; since, notwithstanding the genius and popularity of some who followed, we generally find a still higher place awarded by men of fine taste to Bossuet and Pascal than to Voltaire and Montesquieu. The language was written with a care that might have fettered the powers of ordinary men, but rendered those of such as we have mentioned more resplendent. The laws of taste and grammar, like those of nature, were held immutable: it was the province of human genius to deal with them, as it does with nature, by a skilful employment, not by a preposterous and ineffectual rebellion against their control. Purity and perspicuity, simplicity and ease, were conditions of good writing: it was never thought that an author, especially in prose, might transgress the recognized idiom of his mother-tongue, or invent words unknown to it, for the sake of effect or novelty; or if, in some rare occurrence, so bold a course might be forgiven, these exceptions were but as miracles in religion, which would cease to strike us, or be no miracles at all, but for the regularity of the laws to which they bear witness even while they infringe them. We have not thought it necessary to defer the praise which some great French writers have deserved on the score of their language, for this chapter. Bossuet, Malebranche, Arnauld, and Pascal have already been commemorated; and it is sufficient to point out two causes in perpetual operation during this period which ennobled, and preserved in purity, the literature of France: one, the salutary influence of the Academy; the other, that emulation between the Jesuits and Jansenists for public esteem, which was better displayed in their politer writings than in the abstruse and endless controversy of the five pro-

Age of  
Louis XIV.  
in France

<sup>1</sup> Salfi, xiii. 450.



positions. A few remain to be mentioned; and as the subject of this chapter, in order to avoid frequent subdivisions, is miscellaneous, the reader must expect to find that we do not, in every instance, confine ourselves to what he may consider as polite letters.

4. Fontenelle, by the variety of his talents, by their application to the pursuits most congenial to the intellectual character of his contemporaries, and by that extraordinary longevity which made those contemporaries not less than three generations of mankind, may be reckoned the best representative of French literature. Born in 1657, and dying within a few days of a complete century, in 1757, he enjoyed the most protracted life of any among the modern learned; and that a life in the full sunshine of Parisian literature, without care and without disease. In nothing was Fontenelle a great writer: his mental and moral disposition resembled each other; equable, without the capacity of performing, and hardly of conceiving, any thing truly elevated, but not less exempt from the fruits of passion, from paradox, unreasonableness, and prejudice. His best productions are, perhaps, the eulogies on the deceased members of the Academy of Sciences, which he pronounced during almost forty years; but these nearly all belong to the eighteenth century: they are just and candid, with sufficient, though not very profound, knowledge of the exact sciences, and a style pure and flowing, which his good sense had freed from some early affectation, and his cold temper as well as sound understanding restrained from extravagance. In his first works, we have symptoms of an infirmity belonging more frequently to age than to youth; but Fontenelle was never young in passion. He there affects the tone of somewhat pedantic and frigid gallantry which seems to have survived the society of the Hôtel Rambouillet who had countenanced it, and which borders too nearly on the language which Molière and his disciples had well exposed in their coxcombs on the stage.

5. The Dialogues of the Dead, published in 1683, are condemned by some critics for their false taste and perpetual strain at something unexpected and paradoxical. The leading idea is, of course, borrowed from Lucian; but Fontenelle has aimed at greater poignancy by contrast: the ghosts in his dialogues are exactly those who had least in common with each other in life; and the

Fontenelle:  
his character.

His Dia-  
logues of  
the Dead.

general object is to bring, by some happy analogy which had not occurred to the reader, or by some ingenious defence of what he had been accustomed to despise, the prominences and depressions of historic characters to a level. This is what is always well received in the kind of society for which Fontenelle wrote; but if much is mere sophistry in his dialogues, if the general tone is little above that of the world, there is also, what we often find in the world, some acuteness and novelty, and some things put in a light which it may be worth while not to neglect.

6. Fenelon, not many years afterwards, copied the scheme, though not the style, of Fontenelle in his own Dia- Those of  
Fenelon. logues of the Dead, written for the use of his pupil, the Duke of Burgundy. Some of these dialogues are not truly of the dead: the characters speak as if on earth, and with earthly designs. They have certainly more solid sense and a more elevated morality than those of Fontenelle, to which La Harpe has preferred them. The noble zeal of Fenelon not to spare the vices of kings, in writing for the heir of one so imperious and so open to the censure of reflecting minds, shines throughout these dialogues; but, designed as they were for a boy, they naturally appear in some places rather superficial.

7. Fontenelle succeeded better in his famous dialogues on the Plurality of Worlds, *Les Mondes*; in which, if the conception is not wholly original, he has at least de- Fonte-  
nelle's  
Plurality  
of Worlds. veloped it with so much spirit and vivacity, that it would show as bad taste to censure his work, as to reckon it a model for imitation. It is one of those happy ideas which have been privileged monopolies of the first inventor; and it will be found, accordingly, that all attempts to copy this whimsical union of gallantry with science have been insipid almost to a ridiculous degree. Fontenelle throws so much gayety and wit into his compliments to the lady whom he initiates into his theory, that we do not confound them with the nonsense of coxcombs; and she is herself so spirited, unaffected, and clever, that no philosopher could be ashamed of gallantry towards so deserving an object. The fascinating paradox, as then it seemed, though our children are now taught to lisp it, that the moon, the planets, the fixed stars, are full of inhabitants, is presented with no more show of science than was indispensable, but with a varying liveli-

ness, that, if we may judge by the consequences, has served to convince as well as amuse. The plurality of worlds had been suggested by Wilkins, and probably by some Cartesians in France; but it was first rendered a popular tenet by this agreeable little book of Fontenelle, which had a great circulation in Europe. The ingenuity with which he obviates the difficulties that he is compelled to acknowledge, is worthy of praise; and a good deal of the popular truths of physical astronomy is found in these dialogues.

8. The History of Oracles, which Fontenelle published in his History 1687, is worthy of observation as a sign of the change that was working in literature. In the provinces of erudition and of polite letters, long so independent, perhaps even so hostile, some tendency towards a coalition began to appear. The men of the world especially, after they had acquired a free temper of thinking in religion, and become accustomed to talk about philosophy, desired to know something of the questions which the learned disputed; but they demanded this knowledge by a short and easy road, with no great sacrifice of their leisure or attention. Fontenelle, in the History of Oracles, as in the dialogues on the Plurality of Worlds, prepared a repast for their taste. A learned Dutch physician, Van Dale, in a dull work, had taken up the subject of the ancient oracles, and explained them by human imposture instead of that of the devil, which had been the more orthodox hypothesis. A certain degree of paradox, or want of orthodoxy, already gave a zest to a book in France; and Fontenelle's lively manner, with more learning than good society at Paris possessed, and about as much as it could endure, united to a clear and acute line of argument, created a popularity for his History of Oracles, which we cannot reckon altogether unmerited.<sup>1</sup>

9. The works of St. Evremond were collected after his death in 1705; but many had been printed before. and he evidently belongs to the latter half of the seventeenth century. The fame of St. Evremond as a brilliant star, during a long life, in the polished aristocracy of France and England, gave, for a time, a considerable lustre to his writings; the greater part of which are such effusions as the daily intercourse of good company called forth. In verse

<sup>1</sup> I have not compared, or indeed read, some of the reasoning, not the learning, of Dale's work; but I rather suspect that Fontenelle is original.

or in prose, he is the gallant friend, rather than lover, of ladies, who, secure probably of love in some other quarter, were proud of the friendship of a wit. He never, to do him justice, mistakes his character, which, as his age was not a little advanced, might have incurred ridicule. Hortense Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin, is his heroine; but we take little interest in compliments to a woman neither respected in her life, nor remembered since. Nothing can be more trifling than the general character of the writings of St. Evremond: but sometimes he rises to literary criticism, or even civil history; and on such topics he is clear, unaffected, cold, without imagination or sensibility,—a type of the frigid being whom an aristocratic and highly polished society is apt to produce. The chief merit of St. Evremond is in his style and manner. He has less wit than Voiture, who contributed to form him; or than Voltaire, whom he contributed to form but he shows neither the effort of the former, nor the restlessness of the latter. Voltaire, however, when he is most quiet, as in the earliest and best of his historical works, seems to bear a considerable resemblance to St. Evremond; and there can be no doubt that he was familiar with the latter's writings.

10. A woman has the glory of being full as conspicuous in the graces of style as any writer of this famous age. <sup>Madame de Sévigné.</sup> It is evident that this was Madame de Sévigné. Her Letters, indeed, were not published till the eighteenth century, but they were written in the mid-day of Louis' reign. Their ease, and freedom from affectation, are more striking by contrast with the two epistolary styles which had been most admired in France: that of Balzac, which is laboriously tumid; and that of Voiture, which becomes insipid by dint of affectation. Every one perceives, that, in the Letters of a mother to her daughter, the public, in a strict sense, is not thought of; and yet the habit of speaking and writing what men of wit and taste would desire to hear and read gives a certain mannerism, I will not say air of effort, even to the Letters of Madame de Sévigné. The abandonment of the heart to its casual impulses is not so genuine as in some that have since been published. It is at least clear, that it is possible to become affected in copying her unaffected style; and some of Walpole's letters bear witness to this. Her wit, and talent of painting by single touches, are very eminent: scarcely any collection of Letters, which contain so little that can



interest a distant age, are read with such pleasure; if they have any general fault, it is a little monotony, and excess of affection towards her daughter, which is reported to have wearied its object, and, in contrast with this, a little want of sensibility towards all beyond her immediate friends, and a readiness to find something ludicrous in the dangers and sufferings of others.<sup>1</sup>

11. The French Academy had been so judicious both in the choice of its members, and in the general tenor of its proceedings, that it stood very high in public esteem; and a voluntary deference was commonly shown to its authority. The favor of Louis XIV., when he grew to manhood, was accorded as amply as that of Richelieu. The Academy was received by the king, when they approached him publicly, with the same ceremonies as the superior courts of justice. This body had, almost from its commencement, undertaken a national dictionary, which should carry the language to its utmost perfection, and trace a road to the highest eloquence that depended on purity and choice of words: more than this could not be given by man. The work proceeded very slowly; and dictionaries were published in the mean time, — one by Richelet in 1680, another by Furetière. The former seems to be little more than a glossary of technical or otherwise doubtful words;<sup>2</sup> but the latter, though pretending to contain only terms of art and science, was found, by its definitions and by the authorities it quoted, to interfere so much with the project of the academicians, who had armed themselves with an exclusive privilege, that they not only expelled Furetière from their body, on the allegation that he had availed himself of materials intrusted to him by the Academy for its own dictionary, but instituted a long process at law to hinder its publication. This was in 1685; and the

<sup>1</sup> The proofs of this are numerous enough in her letters. In one of them, she mentions that a lady of her acquaintance, having been bitten by a mad dog, had gone to be dipped in the sea; and amuses herself by taking off the provincial accent with which she will express herself on the first plunge. She makes a jest of La Voisin's execution; and though that person was as little entitled to sympathy as any one, yet, when a woman is burned alive, it is not usual for another woman to turn it into drollery.

Madame de Sevigné's taste has been ar-

rained for slighting Racine; and she has been charged with the unfortunate prediction: "Il passera comme le café." But it is denied that these words can be found, though few like to give up so diverting a mis-calculation of futurity. In her time, Corneille's party was so well supported, and he deserved so much gratitude and reverence, that we cannot much wonder at her being carried a little too far against his rival. Who has ever seen a woman just towards the rivals of her friends, though many are just towards their own?

<sup>2</sup> Goujet; Baillet, a. 702.

dictionary of Furetière only appeared after his death at Amsterdam in 1690.<sup>1</sup> Whatever may have been the delinquency, moral or legal, of this compiler, his dictionary is praised by Goujet as a rich treasure, in which almost every thing is found that we can desire for a sound knowledge of the language. It has been frequently reprinted, and continued long in esteem. But the dictionary of the Academy, which was published in 1694, claimed an authority to which that of a private man could not pretend. Yet the first edition seems to have rather disappointed the public expectation. Many objected to the want of quotations, and to the observance of an orthography that had become obsolete. The Academy undertook a revision of its work in 1700; and, finally, profiting by the public opinion on which it endeavored to act, rendered this dictionary the most received standard of the French language.<sup>2</sup>

12. The *Grammaire Générale et Raisonnée* of Lancelot, in which Arnauld took a considerable share, is rather a treatise on the philosophy of all language than one <sup>French</sup> ~~grammar~~ peculiar to the French. "The best critics," says Baillet, "acknowledge that there is nothing written by either the ancient or the modern grammarians with so much justness and solidity."<sup>3</sup> Vigneul-Marville bestows upon it an almost equal eulogy.<sup>4</sup> Lancelot was copied, in a great degree, by Lami, in his *Rhetoric, or Art of Speaking*, with little of value that is original.<sup>5</sup> Vaugelas retained his place as the founder of sound grammatical criticism, though his judgments have not been uniformly confirmed by the next generation. His remarks were edited with notes by Thomas Corneille, who had the reputation of an excellent grammarian.<sup>6</sup> The observations of Ménage on the French language, in 1675 and 1676, are said to have the fault of reposing too much on obsolete authorities, even those of the sixteenth century, which had long been proscribed by a politer age.<sup>7</sup> Notwithstanding the zeal of the Academy, no critical laws could arrest the revolutions of speech. Changes came in with the lapse of time, and were sanctioned by the imperious rule of custom. In a book

<sup>1</sup> Pellisson, *Hist. de l'Académie* (continuation par Olivet), p. 47; Goujet, *Bibliothèque Française*, l. 282, *et post*; *Biogr. Univ.*, art. "Furetière."

<sup>2</sup> Pellisson, p. 69; Goujet, p. 261.

<sup>3</sup> *Jugemens des Savans*, n. 606. Goujet copies Baillet's words.

<sup>4</sup> *Mélanges de Littérature*, l. 124.

<sup>5</sup> Goujet, l. 56; Gibert, p. 351.

<sup>6</sup> Goujet, 146; *Biogr. Univ.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*, 153.

on grammar, published as early as 1688, Balzac and Voiture, even Patru and the Port-Royal writers, are called semi-moderns;<sup>1</sup> so many new phrases had since made their way into composition, so many of theirs had acquired a certain air of antiquity.

13. The genius of the French language, as it was estimated in this age by those who aspired to the character of good critics, may be learned from one of the dialogues in a work of Bouhours,—*Les Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène*. Bouhours was a Jesuit, who affected a polite and lively tone, according to the fashion of his time, so as to warrant some degree of ridicule; but a man of taste and judgment, whom, though La Harpe speaks of him with disdain, his contemporaries quoted with respect. The first, and the most interesting at present, of these conversations, which are feigned to take place between two gentlemen of literary taste, turns on the French language.<sup>2</sup> This he presumes to be the best of all modern; deriding the Spanish for its pomp, the Italian for its finical effeminacy.<sup>3</sup> The French has the secret of uniting brevity with clearness, and purity with politeness. The Greek and Latin are obscure where they are concise. The Spanish is always diffuse. The Spanish is a turbid torrent, often overspreading the country with great noise; the Italian, a gentle rivulet, occasionally given to inundate its meadows; the French, a noble river, enriching the adjacent lands, but with an equal majestic course of waters that never quits its level.<sup>4</sup> Spanish, again, he compares to an insolent beauty, that holds her head high, and takes pleasure in splendid dress; Italian, to a painted coquette, always attired to please; French, to a modest and agreeable lady, who, if you may call her a prude, has nothing unceivil or repulsive in her prudery. Latin is the common mother; but, while Italian has the sort of likeness to Latin which an ape bears to a man, in French we have the dignity

<sup>1</sup> Bibliothèque Universelle, xv. 351. — Perrault makes a similar remark on Patru.

<sup>2</sup> Bouhours points out several innovations which had lately come into use. He dislikes *avoir des menagemens* or *avoir de la considération*, and thinks these phrases would not last: in which he was mistaken. *Tout de visage* and *tout d'esprit* were new: the words *fonds*, *mesures*, *amitiés*, *compte*, and many more, were used in new senses. Thus also *assez* and *trop*; as the phrase, *c'en étoit trop de votre avis*

It seems, on reflection, that some of the expressions he animadverts upon must have been affected while they were new, being in opposition to the correct meaning of words: and it is always curious, in other languages as well as our own, to observe the comparatively recent nobility of many things quite established by present usage. — *Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène*, p. 96.

<sup>3</sup> P. 52 (ed. 1671).

<sup>4</sup> P. 77.

politeness, purity, and good sense of the Augustan age. The French have rejected almost all the diminutives once in use, and do not, like the Italians, admit the right of framing others. This language does not tolerate rhyming sounds in prose, nor even any kind of assonance, as *amertume* and *fortune*, near together. It rejects very bold metaphors, as the zenith of virtue, the *apogée* of glory; and it is remarkable that its poetry is almost as hostile to metaphor as its prose.<sup>1</sup> "We have very few words merely poetical; and the language of our poets is not very different from that of the world. Whatever be the cause, it is certain that a figurative style is neither good among us in verse nor in prose." This is evidently much exaggerated, and in contradiction to the known examples, at least, of dramatic poetry. All affectation and labor, he proceeds to say, are equally repugnant to a good French style. "If we would speak the language well, we should not try to speak it too well. It detests excess of ornament; it would almost desire that words should be, as it were, naked; their dress must be no more than necessity and decency require. Its simplicity is averse to compound words: those adjectives which are formed by such a juncture of two have long been exiled both from prose and verse." "Our own pronunciation," he affirms, "is the most natural and pleasing of any. The Chinese and other Asiatics sing; the Germans rattle (*rallent*); the Spaniards spout; the Italians sigh; the English whistle; the French alone can properly be said to speak; which arises, in fact, from our not accenting any syllable before the penultimate. The French language is best adapted to express the tenderest sentiments of the heart; for which reason our songs are so impassioned and pathetic, while those of Italy and Spain are full of nonsense. Other languages may address the imagination; but ours alone speaks to the heart, which never understands what is said in them."<sup>2</sup> This is literally amusing; and, with equal patriotism, Bouhours, in another place, has proposed the question, whether a German can, by the nature of things, possess any wit.

14. Bouhours, not deficient, as we may perceive, in self-confidence, and proneness to censure, presumed to turn into ridicule the writers of Port Royal, at that time of such distinguished reputation as threatened to eclipse the credit which the Jesuits had always preserved

Attacked  
by Barbier  
d'Aucour.

<sup>1</sup> P. 60.

<sup>2</sup> P. 68.



in polite letters. He alludes to their long periods, and the exaggerated phrases of invective which they poured forth in controversy.<sup>1</sup> But the Jansenist party was well able to defend itself. Barbier d'Aucour retaliated on the vain Jesuit by his *Sentimens de Cleanthe sur les Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène*. It seems to be the general opinion of French critics, that he has well exposed the weak parts of his adversary, his affected air of the world, the occasional frivolity and feebleness of his observations; yet there seems something morose in the censures of the supposed Cleanthe, which renders this book less agreeable than that on which it animadverts.

15. Another work of criticism by Bouhours, *La Manière de Bien Penser*, which is also in dialogue, contains much that shows acuteness and delicacy of discrimination; though his taste was deficient in warmth and sensibility, which renders him somewhat too strict and fastidious in his judgments. He is an unsparing enemy of obscurity, exaggeration, and nonsense; and laughs at the hyperbolical language of Balzac, while he has rather overpraised Voiture.<sup>2</sup> The affected, inflated thoughts, of which the Italian and Spanish writers afford him many examples, Bouhours justly condemns, and, by the correctness of his judgment, may de-

<sup>1</sup> P. 150. Vigneul-Marville observes that the Port-Royal writers formed their style originally on that of Balzac (vol. i. p. 107); and that M. d'Andilly, brother of Antony Arnauld, affected at one time a grand and copious manner like the Spaniards, as being more serious and imposing, especially in devotional writings; but afterwards, finding the French were impatient of this style, that party abandoned it for one more concise, which it is by no means less difficult to write well, — p. 139. Budler seems to refer their love of long periods to the famous advocate Le Maître, who had employed them in his pleadings, not only as giving more dignity, but also because the public taste at that time favored them. — *Jugemens des Sçavans*, n. 953.

<sup>2</sup> Voiture, he says, always takes a tone of railers when he exaggerates. "Le faux devient vrai à la faveur de l'ironie." — p. 29. But we can hardly think that Balzac was not gravely ironical in some of the strange or barboles which Bouhours quotes from him.

In the fourth dialogue, Bouhours has many just observations on the necessity

of clearness. An obscurity arising from allusion to things now unknown, such as we find in the ancients, is rather a misfortune than a fault; but this is no excuse for one which may be avoided, and arises from the writer's indistinctness of conception or language. "Cela n'est pas intelligible, dit Philinte" (after hearing a foolish rhapsody extracted from a funeral sermon on Louis XIII.). "Non, répondit Eudoxe, ce n'est pas tout-à-fait de la galimatias, ce n'est que du pichus. Vous mettez donc, dit Philinte, de la différence entre la galimatias et le pichus? Oui, répartit Eudoxe, le galimatias renferme une obscurité profonde, et n'a de soi-même nul sens raisonnable. Le pichus n'est pas si obscur, et a un brillant qui signifie, ou semble signifier, quelque chose: le soleil y entre d'ordinaire, et c'est peut-être ce qui a donné lieu en notre langage au nom de pichus. Ce n'est pas que quelquelfois le pichus ne devienne obscur, jusqu'à n'être pas entendu; mais alors le galimatias s'en joint; ce ne sont que brélaus et que ténèbres de tous côtés."

p. 342.

serve, on the whole, a respectable place in the second order of critics.

16. The *Réflexions sur l'Eloquence et sur la Poésie* of Rapin, another Jesuit, whose Latin poem on Gardens has already been praised, are judicious, though perhaps rather too diffuse: his criticism is what would appear severe in our times; but it was that of a man formed by the ancients, and who lived also in the best and most critical age of France. The reflections on poetry are avowedly founded on Aristotle, but with much that is new, and with examples from modern poets to confirm and illustrate it. The practice at this time in France was to depreciate the Italians; and Tasso is often the subject of Rapin's censure, for want, among other things, of that grave and majestic character which epic poetry demands. Yet Rapin is not so rigorous but that he can blame the coldness of modern precepts in regard to French poetry. After condemning the pompous tone of Brebœuf in his translation of the *Pharsalia*, he remarks that "we have gone since to an opposite extreme by too scrupulous a care for the purity of the language: for we have begun to take from poetry its force and dignity by too much reserve and a false modesty, which we have established as characteristics of our language, so as to deprive it of that judicious boldness which true poetry requires; we have cut off the metaphors and all those figures of speech which give force and spirit to words, and reduced all the artifices of words to a pure, regular style, which exposes itself to no risk by bold expression. The taste of the age, the influence of women who are naturally timid, that of the court which had hardly any thing in common with the ancients, on account of its usual antipathy for learning, accredited this manner of writing."<sup>1</sup> In this, Rapin seems to glance at the polite but cold criticism of his brother Jesuit, Bouhours.

Rapin's Reflections on Eloquence and Poetry.

17. Rapin, in another work of criticism, the *Parallels of Great Men of Antiquity*, has weighed, in the scales of his own judgment, Demosthenes and Cicero, Homer and Virgil, Thucydides and Livy, Plato and Aristotle. Thus eloquence, poetry, history, and philosophy pass under review. The taste of Rapin is for the Latins; Cicero he prefers to Demosthenes; Livy, on the whole, to

His Parallels of Great Men.

Thucydides, though this he leaves more to the reader; but is confident that none except mere grammarians have ranked Homer above Virgil.<sup>1</sup> The loquacity of the older poet, the frequency of his moral reflections (which Rapin thinks misplaced in an epic poem), his similes, the sameness of his transitions, are treated very freely; yet he gives him the preference over Virgil for grandeur and nobleness of narration, for his epithets, and the splendor of his language. But he is of opinion that Æneas is a much finer character than Achilles. These two epic poets he holds, however, to be the greatest in the world: as for all the rest, ancient and modern, he enumerates them one after another, and can find little but faults in them all.<sup>2</sup> Nor does he esteem dramatic and lyric poets, at least modern, much better.

18. The treatise on Epic Poetry by Bossu was once of some reputation. An English poet has thought fit Bossu on Epic Poetry. to say, that we should have stared, like Indians, at Homer, if Bossu had not taught us to understand him.<sup>3</sup> The book is, however, long since forgotten; and we fancy that we understand Homer not the worse. It is in six books, which treat of the fable, the action, the narration, the manners, the machinery, the sentiments and expressions, of an epic poem. Homer is the favorite poet of Bossu, and Virgil next to him: this preference of the superior model does him some honor in a generation which was becoming insensible to its excellence. Bossu is judicious and correct in taste, but without much depth; and he seems to want the acuteness of Bouhours.

19. Fontenelle is a critic of whom it may be said, that he Fontenelle's critical writings. did more injury to fine taste and sensibility in works of imagination and sentiment than any man without his good sense and natural acuteness could have done. He is systematically cold: if he seems to tolerate any flight of the poet, it is rather by caprice than by a genuine discernment of beauty; but he clings, with the unyielding claw of a cold-blooded animal, to the faults of great writers, which he exposes with reason and sarcasm. His *Reflections on Poetry* relate mostly to dramatic composition, and to that of the French stage. Theocritus is his victim in the *Dissertations*

<sup>1</sup> P. 158.<sup>2</sup> P. 175.<sup>3</sup> "Had Bossu never writ, the world had still, Like Indians, viewed this mighty piece of wit."MULGRAVE'S *Essay on Poetry*

tation on Pastoral Poetry: but Fontenelle gave the Sicilian his revenge; he wrote pastorals himself; and we have altogether forgotten, or, when we again look at, can very partially approve, the idyls of the Boulevards, while those Doric dactyls of Theocritus linger still, like what Schiller has called soft music of yesterday, from our schoolboy reminiscences, on our aged ears.

20. The reign of mere scholars was now at an end; no worse name than that of "pedant" could be imposed on those who sought for glory; the admiration of all that was national in arts, in arms, in manners, as well as in speech, carried away like a torrent those prescriptive titles to reverence which only lingered in colleges. The superiority of the Latin language to French had long been contested; even Henry Stephens has a dissertation in favor of the latter; and in this period, though a few resolute scholars did not retire from the field, it was generally held, either that French was every way the better means of expressing our thoughts, or at least so much more convenient as to put nearly an end to the use of the other. Latin had been the privileged language of stone; but Louis XIV., in consequence of an essay by Charpentier, in 1676, replaced the inscriptions on his triumphal arches by others in French.<sup>1</sup> This, of course, does not much affect the general question between the two languages.

Preference  
of French  
language to  
Latin.

21. But it was not in language alone that the ancients were to endure the aggression of a disobedient posterity. It had long been a problem in Europe, whether they had not been surpassed; one, perhaps, which began before the younger generations could make good their claim. But time, the nominal ally of the old possessors, gave his more powerful aid to their opponents: every age saw the proportions change, and new men rise up to strengthen the ranks of the assailants. In mathematical science, in natural knowledge, the ancients had none but a few mere pedants, or half-read lovers of paradox, to maintain their superiority but in the beauties of language, in eloquence and poetry, the suffrage of criticism had long been theirs. It seemed time to dispute even this. Charles Perrault, a man of some learning, some variety of acquirement, and a good deal of ingenuity and quickness, published, in 1687, his

General  
superiority  
of ancients  
disputed.

Charles  
Perrault.

<sup>1</sup> Goujet, l. 13.



famous Parallel of the Ancients and Moderns in all that regards Arts and Sciences. This is a series of dialogues, the parties being, first, a president, deeply learned, and prejudiced in all respects for antiquity; secondly, an abbé, not ignorant, but having reflected more than read, cool and impartial, always made to appear in the right, or, in other words, the author's representative; thirdly, a man of the world, seizing the gay side of every subject, and apparently brought in to prevent the book from becoming dull. They begin with architecture and painting, and soon make it clear that Athens was a mere heap of pig-sties in comparison with Versailles: the ancient painters fare equally ill. They next advance to eloquence and poetry; and here, where the strife of war is sharpest, the defeat of antiquity is chanted with triumph. Homer, Virgil, Horace, are successively brought forward for severe and often unjust censure: but, of course, it is not to be imagined that Perrault is always in the wrong; he had to fight against a pedantic admiration which surrenders all judgment; and, having found the bow bent too much in one way, he forced it himself too violently into another direction. It is the fault of such books to be one-sided: they are not unfrequently right in censuring blemishes, but very uncandid in suppressing beauties. Homer has been worst used by Perrault, who had not the least power of feeling his excellence; but the advocate of the newer age in his dialogue admits that the *Æneid* is superior to any modern epic. In his comparison of eloquence, Perrault has given some specimens of both sides in contrast; comparing, by means, however, of his own versions, the funeral orations of Pericles and Plato with those of Bourdaloue, Bossuet, and Fléchier, the description by Pliny of his country-seat with one by Balzac, an epistle of Cicero with another of Balzac. These comparisons were fitted to produce a great effect among those who could neither read the original text, nor place themselves in the midst of ancient feelings and habits. It is easy to perceive that a vast majority of the French in that age would agree with Perrault: the book was written for the times.

22. Fontenelle, in a very short digression on the ancients and moderns, subjoined to his Discourse on Pastoral Poetry, followed the steps of Perrault. "The whole question as to pre-eminence between the ancients and moderns," he begins, "reduces itself into another, whether the

Fontenelle.

trees that used to grow in our woods were larger than those which grow now. If they were, Homer, Plato, Demosthenes, cannot be equalled in these ages; but, if our trees are as large as trees were of old, then there is no reason why we may not equal Homer, Plato, and Demosthenes." The sophistry of this is glaring enough; but it was logic for Paris. In the rest of this short essay, there are the usual characteristics of Fontenelle, — cool good sense, and an incapacity, by natural privation, of feeling the highest excellence in works of taste.

23. Boileau, in observations annexed to his translation of Longinus, as well as in a few sallies of his poetry, defended the great poets, especially Homer and Pindar, with dignity and moderation; freely abandoning the cause of antiquity where he felt it to be untenable. Perrault replied with courage, — a quality meriting some praise where the adversary was so powerful in sarcasm, and so little accustomed to spare it; but the controversy ceased in tolerable friendship.

24. The knowledge of new accessions to literature which its lovers demanded had hitherto been communicated only through the annual catalogues published at Frankfort or other places. But these lists of titles-First Review: Journal des Savans pages were unsatisfactory to the distant scholar, who sought to become acquainted with the real progress of learning, and to know what he might find it worth while to purchase. Denis de Sallo, a member of the Parliament of Paris, and not wholly undistinguished in literature, though his other works are not much remembered, by carrying into effect a happy project of his own, gave birth, as it were, to a mighty spirit, which has grown up in strength and enterprise, till it has become the ruling power of the literary world. Monday, the 5th of January, 1665, is the date of the first number of the first review, — the *Journal des Savans*, — published by Sallo under the name of the Sieur de Hedouville, which some have said to be that of his servant.<sup>1</sup> It was printed weekly, in a duodecimo or sexto-decimo form; each number containing from

<sup>1</sup> Camusat, in his *Histoire Critique des Journaux*, in two volumes, 1734, which, notwithstanding its general title, is chiefly confined to the history of the *Journal des Savans*, and wholly to such as appeared in France, has not been able to clear up this interesting point: for there are not wanting those who assert that Hedouville

was the name of an estate belonging to Sallo; and he is called in some public description, without reference to the journal, *Domains de Sallo de Hedouville* in Parliament and senator. — Camusat, i. 13. Notwithstanding this, there is evidence that leads us to the valet; so that "*nupillus deliberandum cousoo; Res magna est*"

twelve to sixteen pages. The first book ever reviewed (let us observe the difference of subject between that and the last, whatever the last may be) was an edition of the works of Victor Vitensis and Vigilius Tapsensis, African bishops of the fifth century, by Father Chiffet, a Jesuit.<sup>1</sup> The second is Spelman's Glossary. According to the prospectus prefixed to the *Journal des Sçavans*, it was not designed for a mere review, but a literary miscellany; composed, in the first place, of an exact catalogue of the chief books which should be printed in Europe; not content with the mere titles, as the majority of bibliographers had hitherto been, but giving an account of their contents, and their value to the public: it was also to contain a necrology of distinguished authors, an account of experiments in physics and chemistry, and of new discoveries in arts and sciences, with the principal decisions of civil and ecclesiastical tribunals, the decrees of the Sorbonne and other French or foreign universities; in short, whatever might be interesting to men of letters. We find, therefore, some piece of news, more or less of a literary or scientific nature, subjoined to each number. Thus, in the first number, we have a double-headed child born near Salisbury; in the second, a question of legitimacy decided in the Parliament of Paris; in the third, an experiment on a new ship or boat constructed by Sir William Petty; in the fourth, an account of a discussion in the college of Jesuits on the nature of comets. The scientific articles, which bear a large proportion to the rest, are illustrated by engravings. It was complained that the *Journal des Sçavans* did not pay much regard to polite or amusing literature; and this led to the publication of the *Mercur Galant*, by Visé, which gave reviews of poetry and of the drama.

25. Though the notices in the *Journal des Sçavans* are very short, and, when they give any character, for the most part of a laudatory tone, Sallo did not fail to raise up enemies by the mere assumption of power which a reviewer is prone to affect. Menage, on a work of whose he had made some criticism, and by no means, as it appears, without justice, replied in wrath; Patin and others rose up as injured authors against the self-erected censor: but he made more formidable enemies

<sup>1</sup> "Victoris Vitensis et Vigili Tapsensis, Provincie Biscenae Episcoporum Opera, edente R. P. Chiffeto, Soc. Jesu. Prob. in 4to Divina." The critique, if such it be, occupies but two pages in small duodecimo. That on Spelman's Glossary which follows, is but in half a page.

by some rather blunt declarations of a Gallican feeling, as became a counsellor of the Parliament of Paris, against the court of Rome; and the privilege of publication was soon withdrawn from Sallo.<sup>1</sup> It is said that he had the spirit to refuse the offer of continuing the journal under a previous censorship; and it passed into other hands,—those of Gallois, who continued it with great success.<sup>2</sup> It is remarkable that the first review, within a few months of its origin, was silenced for assuming too imperious an authority over literature, and for speaking evil of dignities. “In cunis jam Jove dignus erat.” The *Journal des Sçavans*, incomparably the most ancient of living reviews, is still conspicuous for its learning, its candor, and its freedom from those stains of personal and party malice which deform more popular works.

26. The path thus opened to all that could tempt a man who made writing his profession — profit, celebrity, a perpetual appearance in the public eye, the facility of pouring forth every scattered thought of his own, the power of revenge upon every enemy — could not fail to tempt more conspicuous men than Sallo or his successor Gallois. Two of very high reputation, at least of reputation that hence became very high, entered it, — Bayle and Le Clerc. The former, in 1684, commenced a new review, — *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*. He saw, and was well able to improve, the opportunities which periodical criticism furnished to a mind eminently qualified for it; extensively, and, in some points, deeply learned; full of wit, acuteness, and a happy talent of writing in a lively tone without the insipidity of affected politeness. The scholar and philosopher of Rotterdam had a rival in some respects, and ultimately an adversary, in a neighboring city. Le Clerc, settled at Amsterdam as professor of belles-lettres and of Hebrew in the Arminian seminary, undertook in 1686, at the age of twenty-nine, the first of those three celebrated series of reviews to which he owes so much of his fame. This was the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, in all the early volumes of which La Croze, a much inferior person, was his coadjutor, published monthly in a very small form. Le Clerc had afterwards a

Reviews  
established  
by Bayle,

And Le  
Clerc

<sup>1</sup> Camusat, p. 28. Sallo had also attacked the Jesuits.

<sup>2</sup> *Éloge de Gallois*, par Fontenelle, in the latter's works, vol. v. p. 168. *Biographie Universelle*, art. “Sallo” and “Gal-

lois.” Gallois is said to have been a coadjutor of Sallo from the beginning, and some others are named by Camusat as its contributors, among whom were Gomberville and Chapelain.



disagreement with La Croze, and the latter part of the *Bibliothèque Universelle* (that after the tenth volume) is chiefly his own. It ceased to be published in 1693; and the *Bibliothèque Choisie*, which is, perhaps, even a more known work of Le Clerc, did not commence till 1703. But the fulness, the variety, the judicious analysis and selection, as well as the value of the original remarks, which we find in the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, render it of signal utility to those who would embrace the literature of that short but not unimportant period which it illustrates.

27. Meantime a less brilliant, but by no means less erudite, review, the *Leipsik Acts*, had commenced in Germany. The first volume of this series was published in 1682. But being written in Latin, with more regard to the past than to the growing state of opinions, and consequently almost excluding the most attractive, and indeed the most important subjects, with a Lutheran spirit of unchangeable orthodoxy in religion, and with an absence of any thing like philosophy or even connected system in erudition, it is one of the most unreadable books, relatively to its utility in learning, which has ever fallen into my hands. Italy had entered earlier on this critical career: the *Giornale de' Letterati* was begun at Rome in 1668; the *Giornale Veneto de' Litterati*, at Venice in 1671. They continued for some time, but with less conspicuous reputation than those above mentioned. The *Mercure Savant*, published at Amsterdam in 1684, was an indifferent production, which induced Bayle to set up his own *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* in opposition to it. Two reviews were commenced in the German language within the seventeenth century, and three in English. The first of these latter was the *Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious*, London, 1682. This, I believe, lasted but a short time. It was followed by one entitled *The Works of the Learned*, in 1691; and by another, called *History of the Works of the Learned*, in 1699.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jugler, *Hist. Litteraria*, cap. 9. *Bibliothèque Universelle*, xiii. 41. [The first number of *Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious* is dated Jan. 16, 1681-2; and the first book reviewed is *Christiani Liberii Bibliotheca*, Utrecht, 1681. The editor proposes to transcribe from the *Journal des Sçavans* whatever is most valuable; and by far the greater part of the articles relate to foreign books. This review seems

to have lasted but a year: at least, there is only one volume in the British Museum. The *Universal Historical Bibliothèque*, which began in January, 1686, and expired in March, is scarcely worth notice: it is professedly a compilation from the foreign reviews. The *History of the Works of the Learned*, published monthly from 1699 to 1711, is much more respectable; though in this also a very large proportion

28. Bayle had first become known in 1682 by the *Pensées Diverses sur la Comète de 1680*; a work which I am not sure that he ever decidedly surpassed. Its purpose is one hardly worthy, we should imagine, to employ him; since those who could read and reason were not likely to be afraid of comets, and those who could do neither would be little the better for his book. But, with this ostensible aim, Bayle had others in view: it gave scope to his keen observation of mankind, if we may use the word "observation" for that which he chiefly derived from modern books, and to the calm philosophy which he professed. There is less of the love of paradox, less of a cavilling Pyrrhonism, and, though much diffuseness, less of pedantry and irrelevant instances, in the *Pensées Diverses* than in his greater work. It exposed him, however, to controversy: Jurieu, a French minister in Holland, the champion of Calvinistic orthodoxy, waged a war that was only terminated with their lives; and Bayle's Defence of the *Thoughts on the Comet* is full as long as the original performance, but far less entertaining.

Bayle's  
Thoughts  
on the  
Comet.

29. He now projected an immortal undertaking,—the *Historical and Critical Dictionary*. Moreri, a laborious scribe, had published, in 1673, a kind of encyclopedic dictionary,—biographical, historical, and geographical. Bayle professed to fill up the numerous deficiencies, and to rectify the errors of this compiler. It is hard to place his dictionary, which appeared in 1694, under any distinct head in a literary classification which does not make a separate chapter for lexicography. It is almost equally difficult to give a general character of this many-colored web, which great erudition, and still greater acuteness and strength of mind, wove for the last years of the seventeenth century. The learning of Bayle was copious, especially in what was most peculiarly required,—the controversies, the anecdotes, the miscellaneous facts and sentences, scattered over the vast surface of literature for two preceding centuries. In that of antiquity he was less profoundly versed; yet so quick in application of his classical stores, that he passes for a better scholar than he was. His original design may have been only to fill up

His Dic-  
tionary

is given to foreign works, and probably on the credit of Continental journals. The books reviewed are numerous, and commonly of a learned class. The accounts given of them are chiefly analytical; the

reviewer seldom interposing his judgment: if any bias is perceptible, it is towards what was then called the liberal side; but, for the most part, the rule adopted is to "praise favorably of every one — 1842.]

the deficiencies of Moreri; but a mind so fertile and excursive could not be restrained in such limits. We may find, however, in this, an apology for the numerous omissions of Bayle, which would, in a writer absolutely original, seem both capricious and unaccountable. We never can anticipate with confidence that we shall find any name in his dictionary. The notes are most frequently unconnected with the life to which they are appended; so that, under a name uninteresting to us, or inapposite to our purpose, we may be led into the richest vein of the author's fine reasoning or lively wit. Bayle is admirable in exposing the fallacies of dogmatism, the perplexities of philosophy, the weaknesses of those who affect to guide the opinions of mankind. But, wanting the necessary condition of good reasoning,—an earnest desire to reason well, a moral rectitude from which the love of truth must spring,—he often avails himself of petty cavils, and becomes dogmatical in his very doubts. A more sincere spirit of inquiry could not have suffered a man of his penetrating genius to acquiesce, even contingently, in so superficial a scheme as the Manichean. The sophistry of Bayle, however, bears no proportion to his just and acute observations. Still less excuse can be admitted for his indecency, which almost assumes the character of monomania, so invariably does it recur, even where there is least pretext for it.

30. *The Jugemens des Scavans* by Baillet (published in 1685 and 1686), the *Polyhistor* of Morhof in 1689 Baillet; Morhof. are certainly works of criticism as well as of bibliography. But neither of these writers, especially the latter, are of much authority in matters of taste: their erudition was very extensive, their abilities respectable, since they were able to produce such useful and comprehensive works; but they do not greatly serve to enlighten or correct our judgments, nor is the original matter in any considerable proportion to that which they have derived from others. I have taken notice of both these in my preface.

31. France was very fruitful of that miscellaneous literature, which, desultory and amusing, has the advantage of remaining better in the memory than more systematic books, and, in fact, is generally found to supply the man of extensive knowledge with the materials of his conversation, as well as to fill the vacancies of his deeper studies. The memoirs, the letters, the travels, the dialogues and essays,

which might be ranged in so large a class as that we now pass in review, are too numerous to be mentioned; and it must be understood that most of them are less in request even among the studious than they were in the last century. One group has acquired the distinctive name of *Ana*,—the reported conversation, the table-talk, of the learned. Several of these belong to the last part of the sixteenth century, or the first of the next,—the *Scaligerana*, the *Perroniana*, the *Pitheana*, the *Naudæana*, the *Casauboniana*; the last of which are not conversational, but fragments collected from the commonplace books and loose papers of Isaac Casaubon. Two collections of the present period are very well known,—the *Menagiana*, and the *Mélanges de Littérature par Vigneul-Marville*; which differs, indeed, from the rest in not being reported by others, but published by the author himself, yet comes so near in spirit and manner that we may place it in the same class. The *Menagiana* has the common fault of these *Ana*, that it rather disappoints expectation, and does not give us as much new learning as the name of its author seems to promise; but it is amusing, full of light anecdote of a literary kind, and interesting to all who love the recollections of that generation. Vigneul-Marville is an imaginary person: the author of the *Mélanges de Littérature* is D'Argonne, a Benedictine of Rouen. This book has been much esteemed: the mask gives courage to the author, who writes not unlike a Benedictine, but with a general tone of independent thinking, united to good judgment and a tolerably extensive knowledge of the state of literature. He had entered into the religious profession rather late in life. The *Chevraana* and *Segraisiana*, especially the latter, are of little value. The *Parrhasiana* of Le Clerc are less amusing and less miscellaneous than some of the *Ana*; but, in all his writings, there is a love of truth, and a zeal against those who obstruct inquiry, which, to congenial spirits, is as pleasing as it is sure to render him obnoxious to opposite tempers.

32. The characteristics of English writers in the first division of the century were not maintained in the second; though the change, as was natural, did not come on by very rapid steps. The pedantry of unauthorized Latinisms, the affectation of singular and not generally intelligible words from other sources, the love of quaint phrases, strange analogies, and ambitious efforts

English  
style in  
this  
period.



at antithesis, gave way by degrees: a greater ease of writing was what the public demanded, and what the writers after the Restoration sought to attain; they were more strictly idiomatic and English than their predecessors. But this ease sometimes became negligence and feebleness, and often turned to coarseness and vulgarity. The language of Sévigné and Hamilton is eminently colloquial; scarce a turn occurs in their writings which they would not have used in familiar society; but theirs was the colloquy of the gods, ours of men: their idiom, though still simple and French, had been refined in the saloons of Paris by that instinctive rejection of all that is low which the fine tact of accomplished women dictates; while in our own contemporary writers, with little exception, there is what defaces the dialogue of our comedy,—a tone not so much of provincialism, or even of what is called the language of the common people, as of one much worse, the dregs of vulgar ribaldry, which a gentleman must clear from his conversation before he can assert that name. Nor was this confined to those who led irregular lives: the general manners being unpolished, we find in the writings of the clergy, wherever they are polemic or satirical, the same tendency to what is called *slang*; a word which, as itself belongs to the vocabulary it denotes, I use with some unwillingness. The pattern of bad writing in this respect was Sir Roger L'Estrange: his *Æsop's Fables* will present every thing that is hostile to good taste; yet, by a certain wit and readiness in raillery, L'Estrange was a popular writer, and may even now be read, perhaps, with some amusement. The translation of *Don Quixote*, published in 1682, may also be specified as incredibly vulgar, and without the least perception of the tone which the original author has preserved.

33. We can produce, nevertheless, several names of those who laid the foundations at least, and indeed furnished examples, of good style; some of them among the greatest, for other merits, in our literature. Hobbes is perhaps the first of whom we can strictly say, that he is a good English writer: for the excellent passages of Hooker, Sidney, Raleigh, Bacon, Taylor, Chillingworth, and others of the Elizabethan or the first Stuart period, are not sufficient to establish their claim; a good writer being one whose composition is nearly uniform, and who never sinks to such inferiority or negligence as we must confess in most of these. 'To

make such a writer, the absence of gross faults is full as necessary as actual beauties: we are not judging as of poets, by the highest flight of their genius, and forgiving all the rest, but as of a sum of positive and negative quantities, where the latter counterbalance and efface an equal portion of the former. Hobbes is clear, precise, spirited, and, above all, free, in general, from the faults of his predecessors; his language is sensibly less obsolete; he is never vulgar; rarely, if ever, quaint or pedantic.

34. Cowley's prose, very unlike his verse, as Johnson has observed, is perspicuous and unaffected. His few essays may even be reckoned among the earliest Cowley models of good writing. In that, especially, on the death of Cromwell, till, losing his composure, he falls a little into the vulgar style towards the close, we find an absence of pedantry, an ease and graceful choice of idiom, an unstudied harmony of periods, which had been perceived in very few writers of the two preceding reigns. "His thoughts," says Johnson, "are natural, and his style has a smooth and placid equability which has never yet attained its due commendation. Nothing is far-sought or hard-labored; but all is easy without feebleness, and familiar without grossness."

35. Evelyn wrote in 1651 a little piece, purporting to be an account of England by a Frenchman. It is very Evelyn. severe on our manners, especially in London; his abhorrence of the late revolutions in church and state conspiring with his natural politeness, which he had lately improved by foreign travel. It is worth reading as illustrative of social history; but I chiefly mention it here on account of the polish and gentlemanly elegance of the style, which very few had hitherto regarded in such light compositions. An answer by some indignant patriot has been reprinted together with this pamphlet of Evelyn, and is a good specimen of the bestial ribaldry which our ancestors seem to have taken for wit.<sup>1</sup> The later writings of Evelyn are such as his character and habits would lead us to expect; but I am not aware that they often rise above that respectable level, nor are their subjects such as to require an elevated style.

36. Every poem and play of Dryden, as they successively appeared, was ushered into the world by one of those prefaces and dedications which have made him celebrated as a critic

<sup>1</sup> Both these will be found in the late edition of Evelyn's Miscellaneous Works

of poetry and a master of the English language. The Essay on Dramatic Poesy, and its subsequent Defence, the Origin and Progress of Satire, the Parallel of Poetry and Painting, the Life of Plutarch, and other things of minor importance, all prefixed to some more extensive work, complete the catalogue of his prose. The style of Dryden was very superior to any that England had seen. Not conversant with our old writers, so little, in fact, as to find the common phrases of the Elizabethan age unintelligible,<sup>1</sup> he followed the taste of Charles's reign in emulating the politest and most popular writers in the French language. He seems to have formed himself on Montaigne, Balzac, and Voiture; but so ready was his invention, so vigorous his judgment, so complete his mastery over his native tongue, that, in point of style, he must be reckoned above all the three. He had the ease of Montaigne without his negligence, and embarrassed structure of periods; he had the dignity of Balzac, with more varied cadences, and without his hyperbolical tumor; the unexpected turns of Voiture, without his affectation, and air of effort. In the dedications, especially, we find paragraphs of extraordinary gracefulness, such as possibly have never been surpassed in our language. The prefaces are evidently written in a more negligent style: he seems, like Montaigne, to converse with the reader from his arm-chair, and passes onward with little connection from one subject to another.<sup>2</sup> In addressing a patron, a different line is observable; he comes with the respectful air which the occasion seems to demand: but though I do not think that Dryden ever, in language, forgets his own position, we must confess, that the flattery is sometimes palpably untrue, and always offensively indelicate. The dedication of the *Mock Astrologer* to the Duke of Newcastle is a masterpiece of fine writing; and the subject better deserved these lavish commendations than most who received them. That of the *State of Innocence* to the Duchess of York is also very well written; but the adulation is excessive. It appears to me, that, after the Revolution, Dryden took less pains with his style: the colloquial

<sup>1</sup> Malone has given several proofs of this. Dryden's *Prose Works*, vol. i. part 2, p. 133, *et alibi*. Dryden thought expressions wrong and incorrect in Shakespeare and Jonson, which were the current language of their age.

<sup>2</sup> This is his own account. "The nature of a preface is rambling, never wholly out of the way, nor in it . . . This I have learned from the practice of honest Montaigne." — Vol. iii. p. 336.

vulgarisms, and these are not wanting even in his earlier prefaces, become more frequent; his periods are often of more slovenly construction; he forgets, even in his dedications, that he is standing before a lord. Thus, remarking on the account Andromache gives to Hector of her own history, he observes, in a style rather unworthy of him, "The devil was in Hector if he knew not all this matter as well as she who told it him, for she had been his bed-fellow for many years together; and, if he knew it then, it must be confessed that Homer in this long digression has rather given us his own character than that of the fair lady whom he paints."<sup>1</sup>

37. His Essay on Dramatic Poesy, published in 1668, was reprinted sixteen years afterwards; and it is curious to observe the changes which Dryden made in the expression. Malone has carefully noted all these: they show both the care the author took with his own style, and the change which was gradually working in the English language.<sup>2</sup> The Anglicism of terminating the sentence with a preposition is rejected.<sup>3</sup> Thus "I cannot think so contemptibly of the age I live in," is exchanged for "the age in which I live." "A deeper expression of belief than all the actor can persuade us to," is altered, "can insinuate into us." And, though the old form continued in use long after the time of Dryden, it has, of late years, been reckoned inelegant, and proscribed in all cases, perhaps with an unnecessary fastidiousness, to which I have not uniformly deferred; since our language is of a Teutonic structure, and the rules of Latin or French grammar are not always to bind us.

38. This Essay on Dramatic Poesy is written in dialogue; Dryden himself, under the name of Neander, being probably one of the speakers. It turns on the use of rhyme in tragedy, on the observation of the unities, and on some other theatrical questions. Dryden, at this time, was favorable to rhymed tragedies, which his practice

His Essay  
on Drama-  
tic Poesy.

Improve-  
ments in  
his style.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. III. p. 286. This is in the dedication of his third Miscellany to Lord St. Albans.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I. pp. 130-142.

<sup>3</sup> "The preposition in the end of the sentence, a common fault with him (Ben Jonson), and which I have but lately observed in my own writings,"—p. 237. The form is, in my opinion, sometimes emphatic and spirited, though its frequent use appears slovenly. I remember my

late friend, Mr. Richard Sharp, whose good taste is well known, used to quote an Interrogatory of Hooker, "Shall there be a God to swear by, and none to pray to?" as an instance of the force which this arrangement, so eminently idiomatic, sometimes gives. In the passive voice, I think it better than in the active; nor can it always be dispensed with, unless we choose rather the feeble encumbering pronoun *which*.



supported. Sir Robert Howard having written some observations on that essay, and taken a different view as to rhyme. Dryden published a defence of his essay in a masterly style of cutting scorn, but one hardly justified by the tone of the criticism, which had been very civil towards him; and, as he was apparently in the wrong, the air of superiority seems the more misplaced.

39. Dryden, as a critic, is not to be numbered with those who have sounded the depths of the human mind: hardly with those who analyze the language and sentiments of poets, and teach others to judge by showing why they have judged themselves. He scatters remarks sometimes too indefinite, sometimes too arbitrary; yet his predominating good sense colors the whole: we find in them no perplexing subtilty, no cloudy nonsense, no paradoxes and heresies in taste to revolt us. Those he has made on translation in the preface to that of Ovid's *Epistles* are valuable. "No man," he says, "is capable of translating poetry, who, besides a genius to that art, is not a master both of his author's language and of his own. Nor must we understand the language only of the poet, but his particular turn of thoughts and expression, which are the characters that distinguish and as it were individuate him from all other writers."<sup>1</sup> We cannot pay Dryden the compliment of saying that he gave the example as well as precept, especially in his *Virgil*. He did not scruple to copy Segrais in his discourse on *Epic Poetry*. "If I follow, and what I borrow from him am ready to acknowledge to him; for, impartially speaking, the French are as much better critics than the English as they are worse poets."<sup>2</sup>

40. The greater part of his critical writings relates to the drama, a subject with which he was very conversant; but he had some considerable prejudices: he seems never to have felt the transcendent excellence of Shakspeare; and sometimes, perhaps, his own opinions, if not feigned, are biassed by that sort of self-defence to which he thought himself driven in the prefaces to his several plays. He had many enemies on the watch: the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal*, a satire of great wit, had exposed to ridicule the heroic tragedies;<sup>3</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Vol. III. p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> P. 400.

<sup>3</sup> This comedy was published in 1672: the parodies are amusing; and, though

parody is the most unfair weapon that ridicule can use, they are in most instances warranted by the original. *Bayes*, whether he resembles Dryden or not, is a

many were afterwards ready to forget the merits of the poet in the delinquencies of the politician. "What Virgil wrote," he says, "in the vigor of his age, in plenty and in ease, I have undertaken to translate in my declining years; struggling with wants, oppressed by sickness, curbed in my genius, liable to be misconstrued in all I write; and my judges, if they are not very equitable, already prejudiced against me by the lying character which has been given them of my morals."<sup>1</sup>

41. Dryden will hardly be charged with abandoning too hastily our national credit, when he said the French <sup>Rymer on</sup> were better critics than the English. We had <sup>tragedy.</sup> scarcely any thing worthy of notice to allege beyond his own writings. The *Theatrum Poetarum* by Philips, nephew of Milton, is superficial in every respect. Thomas Rymer, best known to mankind as the editor of the *Fœdera*, but a strenuous advocate for the Aristotelian principles in the drama, published, in 1678, *The Tragedies of the last Age considered and examined by the Practice of the Ancients, and by the Common Sense of all Ages*. This contains a censure of some plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, Shakspeare and Jonson. "I have chiefly considered the fable or plot, which all conclude to be the soul of a tragedy, which with the ancients is always found to be a reasonable soul, but with us for the most part a brutish, and often worse than brutish."<sup>2</sup> I have read only his criticisms on the *Maid's Tragedy*, *King and No King*, and *Rollo*; and, as the conduct and characters of all three are far enough from being invulnerable, it is not surprising that Rymer has often well exposed them.

42. Next to Dryden, the second place among the polite writers of the period from the Restoration to the end of the century has commonly been given to Sir Wil- <sup>Sir William</sup> liam Temple. His *Miscellanies*, to which principal- <sup>Temple's</sup> <sup>Essays.</sup> ly this praise belongs, are not recommended by more erudition than a retired statesman might acquire with no great expense of time, nor by much originality of reflection. But, if Temple has not profound knowledge, he turns all he possesses well to account; if his thoughts are not very striking, they are commonly just. He has less eloquence than Bolingbroke, but is

very comic personage: the character is said by Johnson to have been sketched for Davenant; but I much doubt this report. Davenant had been dead some

years before the *Kohornal* was published, and could have been in no way obnoxious to its satire.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii. p. 657

<sup>2</sup> P. 4.

also free from his restlessness and ostentation. Much also, which now appears superficial in Temple's historical surveys, was far less familiar in his age: he has the merit of a comprehensive and a candid mind. His style, to which we should particularly refer, will be found, in comparison with his contemporaries, highly polished, and sustained with more equanimity than they preserve, remote from any thing either pedantic or humble. The periods are studiously rhythmic; yet they want the variety and peculiar charm that we admire in those of Dryden.

43. Locke is certainly a good writer, relatively to the greater part of his contemporaries: his plain and manly sentences often give us pleasure by the wording alone. But he has some defects: in his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, he is often too figurative for the subject. In all his writings, and especially in the *Treatise on Education*, he is occasionally negligent, and though not vulgar, at least according to the idiom of his age, slovenly in the structure of his sentences as well as the choice of his words: he is not, in mere style, very forcible, and certainly not very elegant.

44. The *Essays of Sir George Mackenzie* are empty and diffuse: the style is full of pedantic words to a degree of barbarism; and, though they were chiefly written after the Revolution, he seems to have wholly formed himself on the older writers, such as Sir Thomas Browne, or even Feltham. He affects the obsolete and unpleasant termination of the third person of the verb in *eth*, which was going out of use even in the pulpit, besides other rust of archaism.<sup>1</sup> Nothing can be more unlike the manner of Dryden, Locke, or Temple. In his matter he seems a mere declaimer, as if the world would any longer endure the trivial morality which the sixteenth century had borrowed from Seneca, or the dull ethics of sermons. It is probable, that, as Mackenzie was a man who had seen and read much, he must have some better passages than I have found in glancing shortly at his works. His countryman, Andrew Fletcher, is a better master of English style: he writes with purity, clearness, and spirit; but the

<sup>1</sup> [It must be confessed that instances of this termination, though not frequent, may be found in the first years of George III., or even later. In the auxiliary *hath*,

It is scarcely yet disused, at least in very grave writings. But the unpleasant sound of *th* is a sufficient objection. — 1842.]

substance is so much before his eyes, that he is little solicitous about language. And a similar character may be given to many of the political tracts in the reign of William. They are well expressed for their purpose; their English is perspicuous, unaffected, often forcible, and, upon the whole, much superior to that of similar writings in the reign of Charles: but they do not challenge a place of which their authors never dreamed; they are not to be counted in the polite literature of England.

45. I may have overlooked, or even never known, some books of sufficient value to deserve mention; and I regret that the list of miscellaneous literature should be so short. But it must be confessed that our golden age did not begin before the eighteenth century, and then with him who has never since been rivalled in grace, humor, and invention. Walton's Complete Angler, published in 1653, seems, by the title, a strange choice out of all the books of half a century; yet its simplicity, its sweetness, its natural grace, and happy intermixture of graver strains with the precepts of angling, have rendered this book deservedly popular, and a model which one of the most famous among our late philosophers, and a successful disciple of Isaac Walton in his favorite art, has condescended to imitate.

Walton's  
Complete  
Angler.

46. A book, not indeed remarkable for its style, but one which I could hardly mention in any less miscellaneous chapter than the present, — though, since it was published in 1638, it ought to have been mentioned before, — is Wilkins's Discovery of a New World, or a Discourse tending to prove that it is probable there may be another habitable World in the Moon, with a Discourse concerning the Possibility of a Passage thither. This is one of the births of that inquiring spirit, that disdain of ancient prejudice, which the seventeenth century produced. Bacon was undoubtedly the father of it in England; but Kepler, and, above all, Galileo, by the new truths they demonstrated, made men fearless in investigation and conjecture. The geographical discoveries indeed of Columbus and Magellan had prepared the way for conjectures hardly more astonishing in the eyes of the vulgar than those had been. Wilkins accordingly begins by bringing a host of sage writers who had denied the existence of antipodes. He expressly maintains the Copernican theory, but admits that it was generally reputed a novel paradox. The

Wilkins's  
New  
World.



arguments on the other side he meets at some length; and knew how to answer, by the principles of compound motion, the plausible objection, that stones falling from a tower were not left behind by the motion of the earth. The spots in the moon he took for sea, and the brighter parts for land. A lunar atmosphere he was forced to hold, and gives reasons for thinking it probable. As to inhabitants, he does not dwell long on the subject. Campanella, and, long before him, Cardinal Cusanus, had believed the sun and moon to be inhabited;<sup>1</sup> and Wilkins ends by saying, "Being content for my own part to have spoken so much of it as may conduce to show the opinion of others concerning the inhabitants of the moon, I dare not myself affirm any thing of these Selenites, because I know not any ground whereon to build any probable opinion. But I think that future ages will discover more, and our posterity perhaps may invent some means for our better acquaintance with those inhabitants." To this he comes as his final proposition, that it may be possible for some of our posterity to find out a conveyance to this other world; and, if there be inhabitants there, to have communication with them. But this chapter is the worst in the book, and shows that Wilkins, notwithstanding his ingenuity, had but crude notions on the principles of physics. He followed this up by what I have not seen,—a Discourse concerning a new Planet; tending to prove that it is possible our Earth is one of the Planets. This appears to be a regular vindication of the Copernican theory, and was published in 1640.

47. The cause of antiquity, so rudely assailed abroad by Perrault and Fontenelle, found support in Sir William Temple, who has defended it in one of his essays with more zeal than prudence, or knowledge of the various subjects on which he contends for the rights of the past. It was, in fact, such a credulous and superficial view as might have been taken by a pedant of the sixteenth century. For it is in science, taking the word largely, full as much as in works of genius, that he denies the ancients to have been surpassed. Temple's Essay, however, was translated into French, and he was supposed by many to have made

<sup>1</sup> "Suspensum in regione solis magis esse solares, claros et illuminatos intellectuales habitantes, spirituales etiam quam in luna, ubi magis lunatici, et in terra magis materiales et crassi, ut illi

intellectuales nature solares sint multum in actu et parum in potentia, terreni vero magis in potentia et parum in actu, lunares in medio fluctantes," &c. — Cusanus, apud Wilkins, p. 103 (edit. 1841).

a brilliant vindication of injured antiquity. But it was soon refuted in the most solid book that was written in any country upon this famous dispute. William Wotton published in 1694 his *Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning*.<sup>1</sup> He draws very well in this the line between Temple and Perrault; avoiding the tasteless judgment of the latter in poetry and eloquence, but pointing out the superiority of the moderns in the whole range of physical science.

## SECT. II.—ON FICTION.

*French Romances — La Fayette and others — Pilgrim's Progress — Turkish Spy*

48. SPAIN had, about the middle of this century, a writer of various literature, who is only known in Europe by his fictions, — Quevedo. His *Visions* and his *Life of the great Tacaño* were early translated, and became very popular.<sup>2</sup> They may be reckoned superior to any thing in comic romance, except *Don Quixote*, that the seventeenth century produced; and yet this commendation is not a high one. In the picaresque style, the *Life of Tacaño* is tolerably amusing; but Quevedo, like others, has long since been surpassed. The *Sueños*, or *Visions*, are better: they show spirit and sharpness with some originality of invention. But *Las Zahradas de Pluton*, which, like the other *Visions*, bears a general resemblance to the *Pilgrim's Progress*, being an allegorical dream, is less powerfully and graphically written: the satire is also rather too obvious. "Lucian," says Bouterwek, "furnished him with the original idea of satirical visions; but Quevedo's were the first of their kind in modern literature. Owing to frequent imitations, their faults are no longer dis-

<sup>1</sup> Wotton had been a boy of astonishing precocity: at six years old, he could readily translate Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; at seven he added some knowledge of Arabic and Syriac. He entered Catherine Hall, Cambridge, in his tenth year; at thirteen, when he took the degree of bachelor of arts, he was acquainted with twelve languages. There being no precedent of

granting a degree to one so young, a special record of his extraordinary proficiency was made in the registers of the university. — *Monk's Life of Bentley*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> The translation of this, "made English by a person of honor," takes great liberties with the original, and endeavors to excel it in wit by means of frequent interpolation.

guised by the charm of novelty; and even their merits have ceased to interest."<sup>1</sup>

49. No species of composition seems less adapted to the genius of the French nation in the reign of Louis XIV. than the heroic romances so much admired in its first years. It must be confessed, that this was but the continuance, and in some respect, possibly, an improvement, of a long-established style of fiction. But it was not fitted to endure reason or ridicule; and the society of Paris knew the use of both weapons. Molière sometimes tried his wit upon the romances; and Boileau, rather later in the day, when the victory had been won, attacked Mademoiselle Scuderi with his sarcastic irony in a dialogue on the heroes of her invention.

50. The first step, in descending from the heroic romance, was to ground not altogether dissimilar. The feats of chivalry were replaced by less wonderful adventures; the love became less hyperbolical in expression, though not less intensely engrossing the personages; the general tone of manners was lowered down better to that of nature, or at least of an ideality which the imagination did not reject; a style already tried in the minor fictions of Spain. The earliest novels that demand attention in this line are those of the Countess de la Fayette, celebrated, while Mademoiselle de la Vergne, under the name of Laverna in the Latin poetry of Menage.<sup>2</sup> Zayde, the first of these, is entirely in the Spanish style: the adventures are improbable, but various, and rather interesting to those who carry no scepticism into fiction; the language is polished and agreeable, though not very animated; and it is easy to perceive, that, while that kind of novel was popular, Zayde would obtain a high place. It has, however, the usual faults: the story is broken by intervening narratives, which occupy too large a space; the sorrows of the principal characters excite, at least as I should judge, little sympathy; and their sentiments and emotions are sometimes too much refined in the alcmbic of the Hôtel Rambouillet. In a later novel, the Princess of

<sup>1</sup> Hist. of Spanish Literature, p. 471.

<sup>2</sup> The name Laverna, though well-sounding, was, in one respect, unlucky; being that given by antiquity to the goddess of thieves. An epigram on Menage, almost, perhaps, too trite to be quoted, is *piquant* enough:—

"Lesbia nulla tibi, nulla est tibi dicta Cythra;  
Carulhe laudator Cynthia nulla tui.  
Sed cum doctorum compilas scribita volumina,  
Nil mirum, si sit culta Laverna tibi."

Cleves, Madame La Fayette threw off the affectation of that circle to which she had once belonged; and though perhaps Zayde is, or was in its own age, the more celebrated novel, it seems to me, that, in this, she has excelled herself. The story, being nothing else than the insuperable and insidious, but not guilty, attachment of a married lady to a lover, required a delicacy and correctness of taste which the authoress has well displayed in it. The probability of the incidents, the natural course they take, the absence of all complication and perplexity, give such an inartificial air to this novel, that we can scarcely help believing it to shadow forth some real event. A modern novelist would probably have made more of the story: the style is always calm, sometimes almost languid; a tone of decorous politeness, like that of the French stage, is never relaxed; but it is precisely by this means that the writer has kept up a moral dignity, of which it would have been so easy to lose sight. The Princess of Cleves is perhaps the first work of mere invention (for, though the characters are historical, there is no known foundation for the story) which brought forward the manners of the aristocracy; it may be said, the contemporary manners; for Madame La Fayette must have copied her own times. As this has become a popular style of fiction, it is just to commemorate the novel which introduced it.

51. The French have few novels of this class in the seven-  
teenth century, which they praise: those of Madame  
Villedieu, or Des Jardins, may deserve to be except-  
ed: but I have not seen them. Scarron, a man  
deformed and diseased, but endowed with vast gayety, which  
generally exuberated in buffoon jests, has the credit of having  
struck out into a new path by his Roman Comique. The  
Spaniards, however, had so much like this, that we cannot  
perceive any great originality in Scarron. The Roman Co-  
mique is still well known, and, if we come to it in vacant  
moments, will serve its end in amusing us; the story and  
characters have no great interest, but they are natural: yet,  
without the least disparagement to the vivacity of Scarron, it  
is still true, that he has been left at an immense distance in  
observation of mankind, in humorous character, and in ludi-  
crous effect, by the novelists of the eighteenth and nineteenth  
centuries. It is said that Scarron's romance is written in a  
pure style; and some have even pretended that he has not

Scarron's  
Roman  
Comique.



been without effect in refining the language. The Roman Bourgeois of Furetière appears to be a novel of middle life; it had some reputation; but I cannot speak of it with any knowledge.

52. Cyrano de Bergerac had some share in directing the public taste towards those extravagances of fancy which were afterwards highly popular. He has been imitated, as some have observed, by Swift and Voltaire, and I should add, to a certain degree, by Hamilton; but all the three have gone far beyond him. He is not himself a very original writer. His Voyage to the Moon, and History of the Empire of the Sun, are manifestly suggested by the True History of Lucian; and he had modern fictions, especially the Voyage to the Moon by Godwin, mentioned in our last volume, which he had evidently read, to imp the wings of an invention not perhaps eminently fertile. Yet Bergerac has the merit of being never wearisome: his fictions are well conceived, and show little effort, which seems also the character of his language in this short piece: though his letters had been written in the worst style of affectation, so as to make us suspect that he was turning the manner of some contemporaries into ridicule. The novels of Segrais, such at least as I have seen, are mere pieces of light satire, designed to amuse by transient allusions the lady by whom he was patronized, — Mademoiselle de Montpensier. If they deserve any regard at all, it is as links in the history of fiction between the mock-heroic romance, of which Voiture had given an instance, and the style of fantastic invention, which was perfected by Hamilton.

53. Charles Perrault may, so far as I know, be said to have invented a kind of fiction which became extremely popular, and has had, even after it ceased to find direct imitators, a perceptible influence over the lighter literature of Europe. The idea was original, and happily executed. Perhaps he sometimes took the tales of children, such as the tradition of many generations had delivered them: but much of his fairy machinery seems to have been his own; and I should give him credit for several of the stories, though it is hard to form a guess. He gave to them all a real interest, as far as could be, with a naturalness of expression, an arch naïveté, a morality neither too obvious nor too refined, and a slight poignancy of satire on the world, which render the

Tales of Mother Goose almost a counterpart in prose to the Fables of La Fontaine.

54. These amusing fictions caught the fancy of an indolent but not stupid nobility. The court of Versailles and <sup>Hamilton,</sup> all Paris resounded with fairy tales: it became the popular style for more than half a century. But few of these fall within our limits. Perrault's immediate followers—Madame Murat and the Countess D'Aunoy, especially the latter—have some merit; but they come very short of the happy simplicity and brevity we find in Mother Goose's Tales. It is possible that Count Antony Hamilton may have written those tales which have made him famous, before the end of the century; though they were published later. But these, with many admirable strokes of wit and invention, have too forced a tone in both these qualities; the labor is too evident, and, thrown away on such trifling, excites something like contempt: they are written for an exclusive coterie, not for the world; and the world in all such cases will sooner or later take its revenge. Yet Hamilton's tales are incomparably superior to what followed: inventions alternately dull and extravagant, a style negligent or mannered, an immorality passing onward from the licentiousness of the Regency to the debased philosophy of the ensuing age, became the general characteristics of these fictions, which finally expired in the neglect and scorn of the world.

55. The *Télémaque* of Fenelon, after being suppressed in France, appeared in Holland clandestinely without <sup>*Télémaque*</sup> the author's consent in 1699. It is needless to say <sup>of Fenelon</sup> that it soon obtained the admiration of Europe; and perhaps there is no book in the French language that has been more read. Fenelon seems to have conceived, that, metre not being essential, as he assumed, to poetry, he had, by imitating the *Odyssey* in *Télémaque*, produced an epic of as legitimate a character as his model. But the boundaries between epic poetry, especially such epics as the *Odyssey*, and romance, were only perceptible by the employment of verse in the former: no elevation of character, no ideality of conception, no charm of imagery or emotion, had been denied to romance. The language of poetry had for two centuries been seized for its use. *Télémaque* must therefore take its place among romances; but still it is true that no romance had breathed so classical a spirit, none had abounded so much with the richness

of poetical language (much, in fact, of Homer, Virgil, and Sophocles, having been woven in with no other change than verbal translation), nor had any preserved such dignity in its circumstances, such beauty, harmony, and nobleness in its diction. It would be as idle to say that Fenelon was indebted to D'Urfé and Calprenède, as to deny that some degree of resemblance may be found in their poetical prose. The one belonged to the morals of chivalry, generous but exaggerated; the other, to those of wisdom and religion. The one has been forgotten because its tone is false: the other is ever admired, and is only less regarded because it is true in excess, because it contains too much of what we know. *Télémaque*, like some other of Fenelon's writings, is to be considered in reference to its object; an object of all the noblest, being to form the character of one to whom many must look up for their welfare, but still very different from the inculcation of profound truth. The beauties of *Télémaque* are very numerous; the descriptions, and indeed the whole tone of the book, have a charm of grace something like the pictures of Guido; but there is also a certain languor which steals over us in reading; and, though there is no real want of variety in the narration, it reminds us so continually of its source, the Homeric legends, as to become rather monotonous. The abandonment of verse has produced too much diffuseness: it will be observed, if we look attentively, that, where Homer is circumstantial, Fenelon is more so; in this he sometimes approaches the minuteness of the romancers. But these defects are more than compensated by the moral and even æsthetic excellence of this romance.

56. If this most fertile province of all literature, as we have now discovered it to be, had yielded so little even in France, a nation that might appear eminently fitted to explore it, down to the close of the seventeenth century, we may be less surprised at the deficiency of our own country. Yet the scarcity of original fiction in England was so great as to be inexplicable by any reasoning. The public taste was not incapable of being pleased; for all the novels and romances of the Continent were readily translated. The manners of all classes were as open to humorous description, the imagination was as vigorous, the heart as susceptible, as in other countries. But not only we find nothing good: it can hardly be said that we find any thing at

Deficiency  
of English  
Romances.

all that has ever attracted notice in English romance. The *Parthenissa* of Lord Orrery, in the heroic style, and the short novels of *Afra Behn*, are nearly as many, perhaps, as could be detected in old libraries. We must leave the beaten track before we can place a single work in this class.

57. The *Pilgrim's Progress* essentially belongs to it; and John Bunyan may pass for the father of our novel-<sup>Pilgrim's Progress.</sup>ists. His success in a line of composition like the spiritual romance or allegory, which seems to have been frigid and unreadable in the few instances where it had been attempted, is doubtless enhanced by his want of all learning, and his low station in life. He was therefore rarely, if ever, an imitator: he was never enchained by rules. Bunyan possessed, in a remarkable degree, the power of representation: his inventive faculty was considerable; but the other is his distinguishing excellence. He saw, and makes us see, what he describes: he is circumstantial without prolixity, and, in the variety and frequent change of his incidents, never loses sight of the unity of his allegorical fable. His invention was enriched, and rather his choice determined, by one rule he had laid down to himself,—the adaptation of all the incidental language of Scripture to his own use. There is scarce a circumstance or metaphor in the Old Testament which does not find a place, bodily and literally, in the story of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; and this peculiar artifice has made his own imagination appear more creative than it really is. In the conduct of the romance, no rigorous attention to the propriety of the allegory seems to have been uniformly preserved. Vanity Fair, or the cave of the two giants, might, for any thing we see, have been placed elsewhere; but it is by this neglect of exact parallelism that he better keeps up the reality of the pilgrimage, and takes off the coldness of mere allegory. It is also to be remembered, that we read this book at an age when the spiritual meaning is either little perceived or little regarded. In his language, nevertheless, Bunyan sometimes mingles the signification too much with the fable: we might be perplexed between the imaginary and the real Christian; but the liveliness of narration soon brings us back, or did at least when we were young, to the fields of fancy. Yet the *Pilgrim's Progress*, like some other books, has of late been a little overrated: its excellence is great, but it is not of the highest rank; and we should be



careful not to break down the landmarks of fame by placing the John Bunyans and the Daniel De Foës among the *Dii Majores* of our worship.

58. I am inclined to claim for England, not the invention, but, for the most part, the composition, of another book, which, being grounded on fiction, may be classed here,—the *Turkish Spy*. A secret emissary of the Porte is supposed to remain at Paris in disguise for above forty years, from 1635 to 1682. His correspondence with a number of persons, various in situation, and with whom, therefore, his letters assume various characters, is protracted through eight volumes. Much, indeed most, relates to the history of those times, and to the anecdotes connected with it; but in these we do not find a large proportion of novelty. The more remarkable letters are those which run into metaphysical and theological speculation. These are written with an earnest seriousness, yet with an extraordinary freedom, such as the feigned garb of a Mohammedan could hardly have exempted from censure in Catholic countries. Mahmud, the mysterious writer, stands on a sort of eminence above all human prejudice: he was privileged to judge as a stranger of the religion and philosophy of Europe; but his bold spirit ranges over the field of Oriental speculation. The *Turkish Spy* is no ordinary production, but contains as many proofs of a thoughtful, if not very profound mind, as any we can find. It suggested the *Persian Letters* to Montesquieu, and the *Jewish* to Argens; the former deviating from his model with the originality of talent, the latter following it with a more servile closeness. Probability, that is, a resemblance to the personated character of an Oriental, was not to be attained, nor was it desirable, in any of these fictions; but Mahmud has something not European, something of a solitary, insulated wanderer, gazing on a world that knows him not, which throws, to my feelings, a striking charm over the *Turkish Spy*; while the *Usbek* of Montesquieu has become more than half Parisian; his ideas are neither those of his birthplace, nor such as have sprung up unbidden from his soul, but those of a polite, witty, and acute society; and the correspondence with his harem in Persia, which Montesquieu has thought attractive to the reader, is not much more interesting than it is probable, and ends in the style of a common romance. As to the *Jewish Letters* of Argens, it is far inferior to the *Turkish Spy*, and, in fact, rather an insipid book.

59. It may be asked why I dispute the claim made by all the foreign biographers in favor of John Paul Marana, a native of Genoa, who is asserted to have published the first volume of the Turkish Spy at Paris in 1684, and the rest in subsequent years.<sup>1</sup> But I am not disputing that Marana is the author of the thirty letters published in 1684, and of twenty more in 1686, which have been literally translated into English, and form about half the first volume in English of our Turkish Spy.<sup>2</sup> Nor do I doubt, in the least, that the remainder of that volume had a French original, though I have never seen it. But the later volumes of the *Espion Turc*, in the edition of 1696, with the date of Cologne, which, according to Barbier, is put for Rouen,<sup>3</sup> are

Chiefly of  
English  
origin.

<sup>1</sup> The first portion was published at Paris, and also at Amsterdam. Bayle gives the following account: "Cet ouvrage a été contrefait à Amsterdam du consentement du Libraire de Paris, qui l'a le premier imprimé. Il sera composé de plusieurs petits volumes qui contiendront les événements les plus considérables de la chrétienté en général, et de la France en particulier, depuis l'année 1637 jusqu'en 1682. Un Italien, natif de Gènes, Marana, donne ces relations pour des lettres écrites aux ministres de la Porte par un espion Turc qui se tenoit caché à Paris. Il prétend les avoir traduites de l'Arabe en Italien: et il raconte fort en long comment il les a trouvées. On soupçonne avec beaucoup d'apparence, que c'est un tour d'esprit Italien, et une fiction ingénieuse semblable à celle dont Virgile s'est servi pour louer Auguste." &c. — *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*; Mars, 1684: in *Œuvres diverses de Bayle*, vol. i. p. 20. The *Espion Turc* is not to be traced in the index to the *Journal des Savans*: nor is it noticed in the *Bibliothèque Universelle*.

<sup>2</sup> Salfi. xiv. 61; *Biogr. Univ.*

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionnaire des Anonymes*, vol. i. p. 406. Barbier's notice of *L'Espion*, dans ses cours des princes Chrétiens, ascribes four volumes out of six, which appear to contain as much as our eight volumes, to Marana, and conjectures that the last two are by another hand: but does not intimate the least suspicion of an English original. And, as his authority is considerable, I must fortify my own opinion by what evidence I can find.

The preface to the second volume (English) of the Turkish Spy begins thus: "Three years are now elapsed since the first volume of letters written by a Spy at Paris was published in English: and it was expected that a second should have come out long before this. The favorable

reception which that found amongst all sorts of readers would have encouraged a speedy translation of the rest, had there been extant any French edition of more than the first part. But, after the strictest inquiry, none could be heard of: and, as for the Italian, our booksellers have not that correspondence in those parts as they have in the more neighboring countries of France and Holland. So that it was a work despaired of to recover any more of this Arabian's memoirs. We little dreamed that the Florentines had been so busy in printing, and so successful in selling, the continued translation of these Arabian epistles, till it was the fortune of an English gentleman to travel in those parts last summer, and discover the happy news. I will not forestall his letter, which is annexed to this preface." A pretended letter with the signature of Daniel Saltmarsh follows, in which the imaginary author tells a strange tale of the manner in which a certain learned physician of Ferrara, Julio de Medici, descended from the Medicen family, put these volumes, in the Italian language, into his hands. This letter is dated Amsterdam, Sept. 9, 1680; and, as the preface refers it to the last summer, I hence conclude that the first edition of the second volume of the Turkish Spy was in 1681; for I have not seen that, nor any other edition earlier than the fifth, printed in 1702.

Marana is said by Salfi and others to have left France in 1683, having fallen into a depression of spirits. Now, the first thirty letters, about one thirty-second part of the entire work, were published in 1684, and about an equal length in 1686. I admit that he had time to double these portions, and thus to publish one-sixth of the whole: but is it likely that between 1686 and 1689 he could have given the rest to the world? If we are not struck

avowedly translated from the English. And to the second volume of our Turkish Spy, published in 1691, is prefixed an account, not very credible, of the manner in which the volumes subsequent to the first had been procured by a traveller, in the original Italian; no French edition, it is declared, being known to the booksellers. That no Italian edition ever existed, is, I apprehend, now generally admitted; and it is to be shown, by those who contend for the claims of Marana to seven out of the eight volumes, that they were published in France before 1691 and the subsequent years, when they appeared in English. The Cologne or Rouen edition of 1696 follows the English so closely, that it has not given the original letters of the first volume, published with the name of Marana, but rendered them back from the translation.

60. In these early letters, I am ready to admit, the scheme of the Turkish Spy may be entirely traced. Marana appears not only to have planned the historical part of the letters, but to have struck out the more original and striking idea of a Mohammedan wavering with religious scruples, which the English continuator has followed up with more philosophy and erudition. The internal evidence for their English origin, in all the latter volumes, is, to my apprehension, exceedingly strong; but I know the difficulty of arguing from this to convince a reader. The proof we demand is the production of these volumes in French, that is, the specification of some public or private library where they may be seen, in any edition anterior to 1691; and nothing short of this can be satisfactory evidence.<sup>1</sup>

by this, is it likely that the English translator should have fabricated the story above mentioned, when the public might know that there was actually a French original which he had rendered? The invention seems without motive. Again: how came the French edition of 1696 to be an avowed translation from the English, when, according to the hypothesis of M. Barbier, the volumes of Marana had all been published in France? Surely, till these appear, we have reason to suspect their existence; and the *onus probandi* lies now on the advocates of Marana's claim.

I shall now produce some direct evidence for the English authorship of seven out of eight parts of the Turkish Spy.

"In the life of Mrs. Manley, published under the title of 'The Adventures of Rivelin,' printed in 1714, in page 14 and

15 it is said, that her father, Sir Roger Manley, was the genuine author of the first volume of the Turkish Spy. Dr. Midgley, an ingenious physician, related to the family by marriage, had the charge of looking over his papers, among which he found that manuscript, which he merely reserved to his proper use; and, both by his own pen and the assistance of some others, continued the work until the eighth volume, without ever having the pleasure to name the author of the first. — MS. note in the copy of the Turkish Spy (coll. 1732) in the British Museum.

Another MS. note in the same volume gives the following extract from *Peccator's Life and Errors*: "Mr. Bradshaw is one best accomplished hackney writer I have met with; his genius was quite above the common also, and his style was his inseparable due. . . . So soon as I saw the first

61. It would not, perhaps, be unfair to bring within the pale of the seventeenth century an effusion of genius <sup>Swift's Tale</sup> sufficient to redeem our name in its annals of fiction. <sup>of a Tub.</sup> The Tale of a Tub, though not published till 1704, was chiefly written, as the author declares, eight years before; and the Battle of the Books, subjoined to it, has every appearance of recent animosity against the opponents of Temple and Boyle, in the question of Phalaris. The Tale of a Tub is, in my apprehension, the masterpiece of Swift: certainly Rabelais has nothing superior, even in invention, nor any thing so condensed, so pointed, so full of real meaning, of biting satire, of felicitous analogy. The Battle of the Books is such an improvement of the similar combat in the Lutrin, that we can hardly own it is an imitation.

volume of the Turkish Spy, the very style and manner of writing convinced me that Bradshaw was the author. . . . Bradshaw's wife owned that Dr. Midgley had engaged him in a work which would take him some years to finish, for which the doctor was to pay him 40s. per sheet; . . . so that 'tis very probable (for I cannot swear I saw him write it), that Mr. William Bradshaw was the author of the Turkish Spy: were it not for this discovery, Dr. Midgley had gone off with the honor of that performance." It thus appears that in England it was looked upon as an original work; though the authority of Duntoun is not very good for the facts he tells, and that of Mrs. Manley much worse. But I do not quote them as evidence of such facts, but of common report. Mrs. Manley, who claims for her father the first volume, certainly written by Marana, must be set aside: as to Dr. Midgley and Mr. Bradshaw, I know nothing to confirm or refute what is here said.

[The hypothesis of these notes, that all the Turkish Spy, after the first of our eight volumes, is of English origin, has been controverted in the Gentleman's Magazine by persons of learning and acuteness. I would surrender my own opinion, if I could see sufficient grounds for doing so; but, as yet, Marana's pretensions are not substantiated by the evidence which I demanded, — the proof of any edition in French anterior to that of our Turkish Spy, the second volume of which (there is no dispute about Marana's authorship of the first) appeared in 1691, with a preface denying the existence of a French original. Those who have had recourse to the arbitrary supposition that Marana communicated his manuscript to some English translator, who published it as his own, should be aware that a mere possibility, without a shadow of evidence, even if it served to explain the facts, cannot be received in historical criticism as truth. — 1843.]



## CHAPTER VIII.

## HISTORY OF PHYSICAL AND OTHER LITERATURE, FROM 1650 TO 1700

## SECT. I.—ON EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY.

Institutions for Science at Florence, London, Paris—Chemistry—Boyle and others.

1. We have now arrived, according to the method pursued in corresponding periods, at the history of mathematical and physical science in the latter part of the seventeenth century. But I must here entreat my readers to excuse the omission of that which ought to occupy a prominent situation in any work that pretends to trace the general progress of human knowledge. The length to which I have found myself already compelled to extend these volumes might be an adequate apology; but I have one more insuperable in the slowness of my own acquaintance with subjects so momentous and difficult, and upon which I could not write without presumptuousness and much peril of betraying ignorance. The names, therefore, of Wallis and Huygers, Newton and Leibnitz, must be passed with distant reverence.

2. This was the age when the experimental philosophy to which Bacon had held the torch, and which had already made considerable progress, especially in Italy, was finally established on the ruins of arbitrary fignments and partial inductions. This philosophy was signally indebted to three associations, the eldest of which did not endure long; but the others have remained to this day the perennial fountains of science,—the Academy del Cimento at Florence, the Royal Society of London, the Academy of Sciences at Paris. The first of these was established in 1657, with the patronage of the Grand Duke Ferdinand II., but under the peculiar care of his brother Leopold. Both were,

Reasons for  
omitting  
mathema-  
tics.

Academy  
del Cimen-  
to.

In a manner at that time remarkable, attached to natural philosophy; and Leopold, less engaged in public affairs, had long carried on a correspondence with the learned of Europe. It is said that the advice of Viviani, one of the greatest geometers that Europe has produced, led to this institution. The name which this academy assumed gave promise of their fundamental rule, — the investigation of truth by experiment alone. The number of *academicians* was unlimited; and all that was required as an article of faith was the abjuration of all faith, a resolution to inquire into truth without regard to any previous sect of philosophy. This academy lasted, unfortunately, but ten years in vigor: it is a great misfortune for any literary institution to depend on one man, and especially on a prince, who, shedding a factitious as well as sometimes a genuine lustre round it, is not easily replaced without a diminution of the world's regard. Leopold, in 1667, became a cardinal, and was thus withdrawn from Florence; others of the Academy del Cimento died, or went away; and it rapidly sunk into insignificance. But a volume containing reports of the yearly experiments it made — among others, the celebrated one, proving, as was then supposed, the incompressibility of water — is generally esteemed.<sup>1</sup>

3. The germ of our Royal Society may be traced to the year 1645, when Wallis, Wilkins, Glisson, and <sup>Royal So-</sup> others less known, agreed to meet weekly at a private house in London, in order to converse on subjects connected with natural, and especially experimental philosophy. Some of these soon afterwards settled in Oxford: and thus arose two little societies in connection with each other; those at Oxford being recruited by Ward, Petty, Willis, and Barthurst. They met at Petty's lodgings till he removed to Ireland in 1652; afterwards at those of Wilkins, in Wadham College, till he became Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1659; about which time most of the Oxford philosophers came to London, and held their meetings in Gresham College. They became more numerous after the Restoration, which gave better hope of a tranquillity indispensable for science; and on the 28th of November, 1660, agreed to form a regular society, which should meet weekly for the promotion of natural philosophy: their registers are kept from this time.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Galuzzi, *Storia del Gran Duca*, vol. vii. p. 240; Tiraboschi, xi. 204; Corniani, p. 1. <sup>2</sup> Birch's *Hist. of Royal Society*, vol. i. ciii. 28.

king, rather fond himself of these subjects, from the beginning afforded them his patronage: their first charter is dated 15th July, 1662, incorporating them by the style of the Royal Society, and appointing Lord Brouncker the first president, assisted by a council of twenty; the conspicuous names among which are Boyle, Kenelm Digby, Wilkins, Wren, Evelyn, and Oldenburg.<sup>1</sup> The last of these was secretary, and editor of the Philosophical Transactions; the first number of which appeared March 1, 1665, containing sixteen pages in quarto. These were continued monthly, or less frequently, according to the materials he possessed. Oldenburg ceased to be the editor in 1667, and was succeeded by Grew, as he was by Hooke. These early transactions are chiefly notes of conversations and remarks made at the meetings, as well as of experiments either then made, or reported to the society.<sup>2</sup>

4. The Academy of Sciences at Paris was established in 1666, under the auspices of Colbert. The king assigned to them a room in the Royal Library for their meetings. Those first selected were all mathematicians; but other departments of science, especially chemistry and anatomy, afterwards furnished associates of considerable name. It seems, nevertheless, that this academy did not cultivate experimental philosophy with such unremitting zeal as the Royal Society, and that abstract mathematics have always borne a larger proportion to the rest of their inquiries. They published in this century ten volumes, known as *Anciens Mémoires de l'Académie*. But near its close, in 1697, they received a regular institution from the king, organizing them in a manner analogous to the two other great literary foundations,—the French Academy, and that of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres.<sup>3</sup>

5. In several branches of physics, the experimental philosopher is both guided and corrected by the eternal laws of geometry. In others he wants this aid, and, in the words of his master, “knows and understands no more concerning the order of nature, than, as her servant and interpreter, he has been taught by observation and tentative processes.” All that concerns the peculiar actions of bodies on each other was of this description; though, in our own times, even this has been in some degree brought under the

<sup>1</sup> Birch's *Hist. of Royal Society*. p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Fontenelle, vol. v. p. 23; Montucla

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, vol. ii. p. 18; Thomson's *Hist. of* *Hist. des Mathématiques*, vol. ii. p. 667.

*Royal Society*, p. 7.

omnipotent control of the modern analysis. Chemistry, or the science of the molecular constituents of bodies, manifested in such peculiar and reciprocal operations, had never been rescued from empirical hands till this period. The transmutation of metals, the universal medicine, and other inquiries utterly unphilosophical in themselves, because they assumed the existence of that which they sought to discover, had occupied the chemists so much, that none of them had made any further progress, than occasionally, by some happy combination or analysis, to contribute an useful preparation to pharmacy, or to detect an unknown substance. Glauber and Van Helmont were the most active and ingenious of these elder chemists; but the former has only been remembered by having long given his name to sulphate of soda, while the latter wasted his time on experiments from which he knew not how to draw right inferences, and his powers on hypotheses which a sounder spirit of the inductive philosophy would have taught him to reject.<sup>1</sup>

6. Chemistry, as a science of principles, hypothetical no doubt, and in a great measure unfounded, but coherent in a plausible system, and better than the reveries of the Paracelsists and Behmenists, was founded by Becker in Germany, by Boyle and his contemporaries of the Royal Society in England. Becker, a native of Spire, who, after wandering from one city of Germany to another, died in London in 1685, by his *Physica Subterranea*, published in 1669, laid the foundation of a theory, which, having in the next century been perfected by Stahl, became the creed of philosophy till nearly the end of the last century. "Becker's theory," says an English writer, "stripped of every thing but the naked statement, may be expressed in the following sentence: Besides water and air, there are three other substances, called earths, which enter into the composition of bodies; namely, the fusible or vitrifiable earth, the inflammable or sulphureous, and the mercurial. By the intimate combination of earths with water is formed an universal acid, from which proceed all other acid bodies: stones are produced by the combination of certain earths; metals, by the combination of all the three earths in proportions which vary according to the metal."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thomson's *Hist. of Chemistry*, i. 183.

<sup>2</sup> Thomson's *Hist. of Royal Society*, p. 463.



7. No one Englishman of the seventeenth century, after Lord Bacon, raised to himself so high a reputation in experimental philosophy as Robert Boyle. It has even been remarked, that he was born in the year of Bacon's death, as the person destined by nature to succeed him; an eulogy which would be extravagant if it implied any parallel between the genius of the two, but hardly so if we look on Boyle as the most faithful, the most patient, the most successful disciple who carried forward the experimental philosophy of Bacon. His works occupy six large volumes in quarto. They may be divided into theological or metaphysical, and physical or experimental. Of the former, we may mention as the most philosophical his *Disquisition into the Final Causes of Natural Things*, his *Free Inquiry into the received Notion of Nature*, his *Discourse of Things above Reason*, his *Considerations about the Reconcilableness of Reason and Religion*, his *Excellency of Theology*, and his *Considerations on the Style of the Scriptures*; but the latter, his chemical and experimental writings, form more than two-thirds of his prolix works.

8. The metaphysical treatises, to use that word in a large sense, of Boyle, or rather those concerning Natural Theology, are very perspicuous, very free from system, and such as bespeak an independent lover of truth. His *Disquisition on Final Causes* was a well-timed vindication of that palmary argument against the paradox of the Cartesians, who had denied the validity of an inference from the manifest adaptation of means to ends in the universe to an intelligent Providence. Boyle takes a more philosophical view of the principle of final causes than had been found in many theologians, who weakened the argument itself by the presumptuous hypothesis, that man was the sole object of Providence in the creation.<sup>1</sup> His greater knowledge of physiology led him to perceive, that there are both animal and what he calls cosmical ends, in which man has no concern.

9 The following passage is so favorable a specimen of the philosophical spirit of Boyle, and so good an illustration of the theory of *idols* in the *Novum Organum*, that, although it might better perhaps have deserved a place in a former chapter, I will not refrain from inserting it: "I know not," he says in his *Free Inquiry into the re-*

His meta-  
physical  
works.

Extract  
from one  
of them.

<sup>1</sup> Boyle's Works, vol. v. p. 304.

ceived Notion of Nature, "whether it be a prerogative in the human mind, that as it is itself a true and positive being, so is it apt to conceive all other things as true and positive beings also: but, whether or no this propensity to frame such kind of ideas supposes an excellency, I fear it occasions mistakes, and makes us think and speak, after the manner of true and positive beings, of such things as are but chimerical, and some of them negations or privations themselves; as death, ignorance, blindness, and the like. It concerns us, therefore, to stand very carefully upon our guard, that we be not insensibly misled by such an innate and unheeded temptation to error as we bring into the world with us."<sup>1</sup>

10. Boyle improved the air-pump and the thermometer, though the latter was first made an accurate instrument of investigation by Newton. He also discovered the law of the air's elasticity; namely, that its bulk is inversely as the pressure upon it. For some of the principles of hydrostatics we are indebted to him, though he did not possess much mathematical knowledge. The Philosophical Transactions contain several valuable papers by him on this science.<sup>2</sup> By his Sceptical Chemist, published in 1661, he did much to overturn the theories of Van Helmont's school,—that commonly called of the iatro-chemists, which was in its highest reputation; raising doubts as to the existence not only of the four elements of the peripatetics, but of those which these chemists had substituted. Boyle holds the elements of bodies to be atoms of different shapes and sizes, the union of which gives origin to what are vulgarly called elements.<sup>3</sup> It is unnecessary to remark, that this is the prevailing theory of the present age.

His merits  
in physics  
and chemistry.

11. I shall borrow the general character of Boyle and of his contemporaries in English chemistry from a modern author of credit. "Perhaps Mr. Boyle may be considered as the first person, neither connected with pharmacy nor mining, who devoted a considerable degree of attention to chemical pursuits. Mr. Boyle, though, in common with the literary men of his age, he may be accused of credulity, was both very laborious and intelligent; and his chemical pursuits, which were various and extensive, and

General  
character  
of Boyle;

<sup>1</sup> Boyle's Works, vol. v. p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Thomson's Hist. of Royal Society, pp. 400, 411.

<sup>3</sup> Thomson's Hist. of Chemistry, i. 206.

intended solely to develop the truth without any regard to previously conceived opinions, contributed essentially to set chemistry free from the trammels of absurdity and superstition in which it had been hitherto enveloped, and to recommend it to philosophers as a science deserving to be studied on account of the important information which it was qualified to convey. His refutation of the alchemistical opinions respecting the constituents of bodies, his observations on cold, on the air, on phosphorus, and on ether, deserve particularly to be mentioned as doing him much honor. We have no regular account of any one substance or of any class of bodies in Mr. Boyle, similar to those which at present are considered as belonging exclusively to the science of chemistry. Neither did he attempt to systematize the phenomena, nor to subject them to any hypothetical explanation.

12. "But his contemporary Dr. Hooke, who had a particular predilection for hypothesis, sketched in his *Micrographia* a very beautiful theoretical explanation of combustion, and promised to develop his doctrine more fully in a subsequent book,—a promise which he never fulfilled; though in his *Lampas*, published about twenty years afterwards, he has given a very beautiful explanation of the way in which a candle burns. Mayow, in his *Essays*, published at Oxford about ten years after the *Micrographia*, embraced the hypothesis of Dr. Hooke without acknowledgment, but clogged it with so many absurd additions of his own as greatly to obscure its lustre and diminish its beauty. Mayow's first and principal Essay contains some happy experiments on respiration and air, and some fortunate conjectures respecting the combustion of the metals; but the most valuable part of the whole is the chapter on affinities, in which he appears to have gone much farther than any other chemist of his day, and to have anticipated some of the best established doctrines of his successors. Sir Isaac Newton, to whom all the sciences lie under such great obligations, made two most important contributions to chemistry, which constitute, as it were, the foundation-stones of its two great divisions. The first was pointing out a method of graduating thermometers, so as to be comparable with each other in whatever part of the world observations with them are made. The second was by pointing out the nature of chemical affinity, and showing that it consisted in an attraction by which the constituents of bodies

were drawn towards each other, and united; thus destroying the previous hypothesis of the hooks and points and rings and wedges, by means of which the different constituents of bodies were conceived to be kept together."<sup>1</sup>

13. Lemery, a druggist at Paris, by his *Cours de Chymie* in 1675, is said to have changed the face of the science: the change, nevertheless, seems to have gone no deeper. "Lemery," says Fontenelle, "was the first who dispersed the real or pretended obscurities of chemistry; who brought it to clearer and more simple notions; who abolished the gross barbarisms of its language; who promised nothing but what he knew the art could perform; and to this he owed the success of his book. It shows not only a sound understanding, but some greatness of soul, to strip one's own science of a false pomp."<sup>2</sup> But we do not find that Lemery had any novel views in chemistry, or that he claims, with any irresistible pretension, the title of a philosopher. In fact, his chemistry seems to have been little more than pharmacy

Lemery.

## SECT. II. — ON NATURAL HISTORY.

Zoology — Ray — Botanical Classifications — Grew — Geological Theories.

14. The accumulation of particular knowledge in natural history must always be progressive where any regard is paid to the subject: every traveller in remote countries, every mariner, may contribute some observation, correct some error, or bring home some new species. Thus zoölogy had made a regular advance from the days of Conrad Gesner; yet with so tardy a step, that, reflecting on the extensive intercourse of Europe with the Eastern and Western World, we may be surprised to find how little Jonston, in the middle of the seventeenth century, had added, even in the most obvious class, that of quadrupeds, to the knowledge collected one hundred years before. But hitherto zoölogy, confined to mere description, and that often careless or indefinite, unenlightened by anatomy, unregulated by me-

Slow progress of zoölogy.

<sup>1</sup> Thomson's *Hist. of Royal Society*, p. 466.

<sup>2</sup> *Eloge de Lemery*, in *Œuvres de Fontenelle*, v. 361; *Biogr. Universelle*.



thod, had not merited the name of a science. That name it owes to John Ray.

15. Ray first appeared in natural history as the editor of the Ornithology of his highly accomplished friend Before Ray. Francis Willoughby, with whom he had travelled over the Continent. This was published in 1676; and the History of Fishes followed in 1686. The descriptions are ascribed to Willoughby, the arrangement to Ray, who might have considered the two works as in great part his own, though he has not interfered with the glory of his deceased friend. Cuvier observes, that the History of Fishes is the more perfect work of the two; that many species are described which will not be found in earlier ichthyologists; and that those of the Mediterranean, especially, are given with great precision.<sup>1</sup>

16. Among the original works of Ray, we may select the Synopsis Methodica Animalium Quadrupedum et His Synop-  
sis of Quad-  
rupeda. Serpentine Generis, published in 1693. This book makes an epoch in zoology, not for the additions of new species it contains, since there are few wholly such, but as the first classification of animals that can be reckoned both general and grounded in nature. He divides them into those with blood and without blood. The former are such as breathe through lungs, and such as breathe through gills. Of the former of these, some have a heart with two ventricles; some have one only. And, among the former class of these, some are viviparous, some oviparous. We thus come to the proper distinction of mammalia. But, in compliance with vulgar prejudice, Ray did not include the cetacea in the same class with quadrupeds, though well aware that they properly belonged to it; and left them as an order of fishes.<sup>2</sup> Quadrupeds he was the first to divide into *ungulate* and *unguiculate*, hoofed and clawed; having himself invented the Latin words.<sup>3</sup> The former are *solidipeda*, *bisulca*, or *quadrisulca*; the latter are *bifida* or *multifida*, and these latter with undivided or with partially divided toes; which latter again may have broad claws, as monkeys, or narrow claws; and these with narrow claws he arranges according to their teeth, as either

<sup>1</sup> Biographie Universelle, art. "Ray."  
<sup>2</sup> "Nos ne a communi hominum opinione nimis recedamus, et ut affectatæ novitatis notam evitemus, cetaceum aquatillum genus, quamvis cum quadrupedibus vivi-

paris in omnibus fere præterquam in pilis et pedibus et elemento in quo degunt convenire videantur, piscibus annuerimus." — p. 55.  
<sup>3</sup> P. 50.

*carnivora* or *leporina*, now generally called *rodentia*. Besides all these quadrupeds, which he calls *analogæ*, he has a general division, called *anomala*, for those without teeth, or with such peculiar arrangements of teeth as we find in the insectivorous genera, the hedgehog and mole.<sup>1</sup>

17. Ray was the first zoölogist who made use of comparative anatomy: he inserts, at length, every account of dissections that he could find; several had been made at Paris. He does not appear to be very anxious about describing every species: thus, in the simian family, he omits several well known.<sup>2</sup> I cannot exactly determine what quadrupeds he has inserted that do not appear in the earlier zoölogists; according to Linnæus, in the twelfth edition of the *Systema Naturæ*, if I have counted rightly, they amount to thirty-two: but I have found him very careless in specifying the synonymes of his predecessors; and many, for which he only quotes Ray, are in Gesner or Jonston. Ray has, however, much the advantage over these in the brevity and closeness of his specific characters. "The particular distinction of his labors," says Cuvier, "consists in an arrangement more clear, more determinate, than those of any of his predecessors, and applied with more consistency and precision. His distribution of the classes of quadrupeds and birds has been followed by the English naturalists almost to our own days; and we find manifest traces of that he has adopted as to the latter class in Linnæus, in Brisson, in Buffon, and in all other ornithologists."<sup>3</sup>

18. The bloodless animals, and even those of cold blood, with the exception of fishes, had occupied but little attention of any good zoölogists till after the middle of the century. They were now studied with considerable success. Redi, established as a physician at Florence, had yet time for that various literature which has immortalized his name. He opposed, and in a great degree disproved by experiment, the prevailing doctrine of the equivocal generation of insects, or that from corruption; though, where he was unable to show the means of reproduction, he had recourse to

<sup>1</sup> P. 58.

<sup>2</sup> "Hoc genus animalium tum caudatorum tum cauda carentium species valde numeroe sunt; non tamen multæ apud autores fide dignos descriptæ occurrunt." He only describes those species he has found in Claudius or Marcellus, and what

he calls *Parisiensis*; such, I presume, as he had found in the Memoirs of the Académie des Sciences. But he does not mention the Simia Inuus, or the S. Hamadryas, and several others of the most known species.

<sup>3</sup> Biogr. Univ.

a paradoxical hypothesis of his own. Redi also enlarged our knowledge of intestinal animals, and made some good experiments on the poison of vipers.<sup>1</sup> Malpighi, who combated, like Redi, the theory of the reproduction of organized bodies from mere corruption, has given one of the most complete treatises on the silkworm that we possess.<sup>2</sup> Swammerdam, a Dutch Swammerdam, naturalist, abandoned his pursuits in human anatomy

to follow up that of insects; and, by his skill and patience in dissection, made numerous discoveries in their structure. His *General History of Insects*, 1669, contains a distribution into four classes, founded on their bodily forms, and the metamorphoses they undergo. A posthumous work, *Biblia Naturæ*, not published till 1738, contains, says the *Biographie Universelle*, "a multitude of facts wholly unknown before Swammerdam: it is impossible to carry farther the anatomy of these little animals, or to be more exact in the description of their organs."

19. Lister, an English physician, may be reckoned one of those who have done most to found the science of conchology by his *Historia sive Synopsis Conchyliorum* in 1685, — a work very copious, and full of accurate delineations; and also by his three treatises on English animals, two of which relate to fluviatile and marine shells. The third, which is on apiders, is not less esteemed in entomology. Lister was also perhaps the first to distinguish the specific characters — such at least as are now reckoned specific, though probably not in his time — of the Asiatic and African elephant. "His works in natural history and comparative anatomy are justly esteemed, because he has shown himself an exact and sagacious observer, and has pointed out with correctness the natural relations of the animals that he describes."<sup>3</sup>

20. The beautiful science which bears the improper name of comparative anatomy had but casually occupied the attention of the medical profession.<sup>4</sup> It was to them, rather than to mere zoölogists, that it owed, and indeed strictly must always owe, its discoveries, which

<sup>1</sup> *Biogr. Univ.*; Tiraboschi, xi. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *Biogr. Univ.*; Tiraboschi, xi. 252.

<sup>3</sup> *Biogr. Univ.*; Chalmers.

<sup>4</sup> It is most probable that this term was originally designed to express a comparison between the human structure and that of brutes, though it might also mean one between different species of the latter.

In the first sense it is never now used; and the second is but a part, though an important one, of the science. *Zoölogia* has been suggested as a better name, but it is not quite analogous to anatomy; and, on the whole, it seems as if we must remain with the old word, protesting against its propriety.

had hitherto been very few. It was now more cultivated; and the relations of structure to the capacities of animal life became more striking as their varieties were more fully understood; the grand theories of final causes found their most convincing arguments. In this period, I believe, comparative anatomy made an important progress, which in the earlier part of the eighteenth century was by no means equally rapid. France took the lead in these researches. "The number of papers on comparative anatomy," says Dr. Thomson, "is greater in the Memoirs of the French Academy than in our national publication. This was owing to the pains taken during the reign of Louis XIV. to furnish the academy with proper animals, and the number of anatomists who received a salary, and of course devoted themselves to anatomical subjects." There are, however, about twenty papers in the Philosophical Transactions before 1700 on this subject.<sup>1</sup>

21. Botany, notwithstanding the gleams of philosophical light which occasionally illustrate the writings of Botany. Cæsalpin and Columna, had seldom gone farther than to name, to describe, and to delineate plants with a greater or less accuracy and copiousness. Yet it long had the advantage over zoölogy; and now, when the latter made a considerable step in advance, it still continued to keep ahead. This is a period of great importance in botanical science. Jungius. Jungius of Hamburg, whose posthumous *Isagoge Phytoscopica* was published in 1679, is said to have been the first in the seventeenth century who led the way to a better classification than that of Lobel; and Sprengel thinks that the English botanists were not unacquainted with his writings: Ray, indeed, owns his obligations to them.<sup>2</sup>

22. But the founder of classification, in the eyes of the world, was Robert Morison of Aberdeen, professor Morison. of botany at Oxford; who, by his *Hortus Blesensis* in 1669, by his *Plantarum Umbelliferarum Distributio Nova* in 1672, and chiefly by his great work, *Historia Plantarum Universalis*, in 1678, laid the basis of a systematic classification, which he partly founded, not on trivial distinctions of appearance, as the older botanists, but, as Cæsalpin had first done, on the fructifying organs. He has been frequently charged with plagiarism from that great Italian, who seems to

<sup>1</sup> Thomson's Hist. of Royal Society, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Sprengel, Hist. Rei Herbariæ, vol. ii. p. 82.



have suffered, as others have done, by failing to carry forward his own luminous conceptions into such details of proof as the world justly demands: another instance of which has been seen in his very striking passages on the circulation of the blood. Sprengel, however, who praises Morison highly, does not impute to him this injustice towards Cæsalpin, whose writings might possibly be unknown in Britain. And it might be observed also, that Morison did not, as has sometimes been alleged, establish the fruit as the sole basis of his arrangement. Out of fifteen classes, into which he distributes all herbaceous plants, but seven are characterized by this distinction.<sup>1</sup> "The examination of Morison's works," says a late biographer, "will enable us to judge of the service he rendered in the reformation of botany. The great botanists, from Gesner to the Bauhins, had published works more or less useful by their discoveries, their observations, their descriptions, or their figures. Gesner had made a great step in considering the fruit as the principal distinction of genera. Fabius Columna adopted this view; Cæsalpin applied it to a classification which should be regarded as better than any that preceded the epoch of which we speak. Morison had made a particular study of fruits, having collected fifteen hundred different species of them, though he did not neglect the importance of the natural affinities of other parts. He dwells on this leading idea, insists on the necessity of establishing generic characters, and has founded his chief works on this basis. He has therefore done real service to the science; nor should the vanity which has made him conceal his obligations to Cæsalpin induce us to refuse him justice."<sup>2</sup> Morison speaks of his own theory with excessive vanity, and depreciates all earlier botanists as full of confusion. Several English writers have been unfavorable to Morison, out of partiality to Ray, with whom he was on bad terms; but Tournefort declares, that, if he had not enlightened botany, it would still have been in darkness.

23. Ray, in his *Methodus Plantarum Nova*, 1682, and in his *Historia Plantarum Universalis*, in three volumes Ray. the first published in 1686, the second in 1688, and the third, which is supplemental, in 1704, trod in the steps of

<sup>1</sup> Sprengel, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Pulteney, *Historical Progress of Botany in England*, vol. I. p. 307

<sup>3</sup> *Biog. Universelle*.

Morison, but with more acknowledgment of what was due to others, and with some improvements of his own. He described 6,900 plants, many of which are now considered as varieties.<sup>1</sup> In the botanical works of Ray we find the natural families of plants better defined, the difference of complete and incomplete flowers more precise, and the grand division of monocotyledons and dicotyledons fully established. He gave much precision to the characteristics of many classes, and introduced several technical terms very useful for the perspicuity of botanical language; finally, he established many general principles of arrangement which have since been adopted.<sup>2</sup> Ray's method of classification was principally by the fruit, though he admits its imperfections. "In fact, his method," says Pulteney, "though he assumes the fruit as the foundation, is an elaborate attempt, for that time, to fix natural classes."<sup>3</sup>

24. Rivinus, in his *Introductio in Rem Herbariam*, Leipsic, 1690, a very short performance, struck into a new path, which has modified, to a great degree, the systems of later botanists. Cæsalpin and Morison had looked mainly to the fruit as the basis of classification: Rivinus added the flower, and laid down as a fundamental rule, that all plants which resemble each other both in the flower and in the fruit ought to bear the same generic name.<sup>4</sup> In some pages of this Introduction, we certainly find the basis of the *Critica Botanica* of Linnæus.<sup>5</sup> Rivinus thinks the arrangement of Cæsalpin the best, and that Morison has only spoiled what he took: of Ray he speaks in terms of eulogy, but blames some part of his method. His own is primarily founded on the flower; and thus he forms eighteen classes, which, by considering the differences of the fruits, he subdivides into ninety-one genera. The specific distinctions he founded on the general habit and appearance of the plant. His method is more thoroughly artificial, as opposed to natural; that is, more established on a single principle, which often brings heterogeneous plants and families together, than that of any of his predecessors: for even Ray had kept the distinction of trees from shrubs and herbs, conceiving it to be founded in their natural fructification. Rivinus set aside

<sup>1</sup> Pulteney. The account of Ray's life and botanical writings in this work occupies nearly a hundred pages.

<sup>2</sup> Biogr. Universelle.

<sup>3</sup> P. 250.

<sup>4</sup> Biogr. Universelle.

<sup>5</sup> Ed

wholly this leading division. Yet he had not been able to reduce all plants to his method, and admitted several anomalous divisions.<sup>1</sup>

25. The merit of establishing an uniform and consistent system was reserved for Tournefort. His *Elémens de la Botanique* appeared in 1694; the Latin translation, *Institutiones Rei Herbariæ*, in 1700. Tournefort, like Rivinus, took the flower or corolla as the basis of his system; and the varieties in the structure, rather than number, of the petals, furnish him with his classes. The genera—for, like other botanists before Linnaeus, he has no intermediate division—are established by the flower and fruit conjointly, or now and then by less essential differences; for he held it better to constitute new genera, than, as others had done, to have anomalous species. The accessory parts of a plant are allowed to supply specific distinctions. But Tournefort divides vegetables, according to old prejudice,—which it is surprising, that, after the precedent of Rivinus to the contrary, he should have regarded,—into herbs and trees; and thus he has twenty-two classes. Simple flowers, monopetalous or polypetalous, form eleven of these; composite flowers, three; the apetalous, one; the cryptogamous, or those without flower or fruit, make another class; shrubs or *suffrutices* are placed in the seventeenth; and trees, in five more, are similarly distributed, according to their floral characters.<sup>2</sup> Sprengel extols much of the system of Tournefort, though he disapproves of the selection of a part so often wanting as the corolla for the sole basis; nor can its various forms be comprised in Tournefort's classes. His orders are well marked, according to the same author; but he multiplied both his genera and species too much, and paid too little attention to the stamina. His method was less repugnant to natural affinities, and more convenient in practice, than any which had come since Lobel. Most of Tournefort's generic distinctions were preserved by Linnaeus, and some which had been abrogated without sufficient reason have since been restored.<sup>3</sup> Ray opposed the system of Tournefort; but some have thought that in his later works he came nearer to it, so as to be called *magis corollista quam fructista*.<sup>4</sup> This, however, is not ac-

<sup>1</sup> *Hogr. Univ.*; Sprengel, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> *Hogr. Univ.*; Thomson's *Hist. of Royal Society*, p. 34; Sprengel, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> *Hogr. Univ.* *Univ.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

knowledgeed by Pulteney, who has paid great attention to Ray's writings.

26. The classification and description of plants constitute what generally is called botany. But these began <sup>Vegetable</sup> now to be studied in connection with the anatomy <sup>physiology.</sup> and physiology of the vegetable world; terms not merely analogical, because as strictly applicable as to animals, but which had never been employed before the middle of the seventeenth century. This interesting science is almost wholly due to two men,—Grew and Malpighi. Grew first directed his thoughts towards the anatomy of plants in 1664, <sup>Grew.</sup> in consequence of reading several books of animal anatomy, which suggested to him, that plants, being the works of the same Author, would probably show similar contrivances. Some had introduced observations of this nature, as Highmore, Sharrock, and Hooke, but only collaterally; so that the systematic treatment of the subject, following the plant from the seed, was left quite open for himself. In 1670, he presented the first book of his work to the Royal Society, who next year ordered it to be printed. It was laid before the society, in print, December, 1671; and on the same day a manuscript by Malpighi on the same subject was read. They went on from this time with equal steps; Malpighi, however, having caused Grew's book to be translated for his own use. Grew speaks very honorably of Malpighi, and without claiming more than the statement of facts permits him.<sup>1</sup>

27. The first book of his Anatomy of Plants, which is the title given to three separate works, when published collectively in 1682, contains the whole of his physiological theory, which is developed at length in those that follow. The nature of vegetation and its processes seem to have been unknown when he began; save that common observation, and the more accurate experience of gardeners and others, must have collected the obvious truths of vegetable anatomy. He does not quote Cæsalpin, and may have been unacquainted with his writings. No man perhaps who created a science has carried it further than Grew: he is so close and diligent in his observations, making use of the microscope, that comparatively few discoveries of great importance have been made in the mere anatomy of plants since his time;<sup>2</sup>

His Anatomy of Plants.

<sup>1</sup> Pulteney; Chalmers; Biogr. Univ. Sprengel calls Grew's book *opus absolutum et immortale*.

<sup>2</sup> Biogr. Universelle.



though some of his opinions are latterly disputed by Michel and others of a new botanical school.

28. The great discovery ascribed to Grew is of the sexual system in plants. He speaks thus of what he calls the attire, though rather, I think, in obscure terms: "The primary and chief use of the attire is such as hath respect to the plant itself, and so appears to be very great and necessary. Because even those plants which have no flower or foliature are yet some way or other attired, either with the seminiform or the floral attire; so that it seems to perform its service to the seeds as the foliature to the fruit. In discourse hereof with our learned Savilian professor Sir Thomas Millington, he told me he conceived that the attire doth serve, as the male, for the generation of the seed. I immediately replied, that I was of the same opinion, and gave him some reasons for it, and answered some objections which might oppose them. But withal, in regard every plant is ἀρρενῶδες, or male and female, that I was also of opinion that it serveth for the separation of some parts as well as the affusion of others."<sup>1</sup> He proceeds to explain his notion of vegetable impregnation. It is singular that he should suppose all plants to be hermaphrodite; and this shows he could not have recollected what had long been known as to the palm, or the passages in *Casalpin* relative to the subject.

29. Ray admitted Grew's opinion cautiously at first: "Nos ut verisimilem tantum admittimus." But in his *Sylloge Stirpium*, 1694, he fully accedes to it. The real establishment of the sexual theory, however, is due to Camerarius, professor of botany at Tübingen, whose letter on that subject, published 1694, in the work of another, did much to spread the theory over Europe. His experiments, indeed, were necessary to confirm what Grew had rather hazarded as a conjecture than brought to a test; and he showed that flowers deprived of their stamina do not produce seeds capable of continuing the species.<sup>2</sup> Woodward, in the *Philosophical Transactions*, illustrated the nutrition of plants by putting sprigs of vegetables in phials filled with water, and, after some time, determining the weight they had gained and the quantity they had imbibed.<sup>3</sup> These experiments had

<sup>1</sup> Book iv. ch. 1. He had hinted at some "primary and private use of the attire," in book i. ch. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Sprengel; *Biogr. Univ.*; Pulteney, p. 325.

<sup>3</sup> Thomson's *Hist. of Royal Society*, p. 68.

He discovers the sexual system

Camerarius confirms this.

been made by Van Helmont, who had inferred from them that water is convertible into solid matter.<sup>1</sup>

30. It is just to observe, that some had preceded Grew in vegetable physiology. Aromatari, in a letter of only four pages, published at Venice in 1625, on the generation of plants from seeds, which was reprinted in the Philosophical Transactions, showed the analogy between grains and eggs, each containing a minute organized embryo, which employs the substances enclosing it for its own development. Aromatari has also understood the use of the cotyledons.<sup>2</sup> Brown, in his Inquiry into Vulgar Errors, has remarks on the budding of plants, and on the quinary number which they affect in their flower. Kenelm Digby, according to Sprengel, first explained the necessity in vegetation for oxygen, or vital air, which had lately been discovered by Bathurst.<sup>3</sup> Hooke carried the discoveries hitherto made in vegetable anatomy much further in his Micrographia. Sharrock and Lister contributed some knowledge; but they were rather later than Grew. None of these deserve such a place as Malpighi, who, says Sprengel, was not inferior to Grew in acuteness, though probably, through some illusions of prejudice, he has not so well understood and explained many things. But the structure and growth of seeds he has explained better; and Grew seems to have followed him. His book is also better arranged and more concise.<sup>4</sup> The Dutch did much to enlarge botanical science. The Hortus Indicus Malabaricus of Rheede, who had been a governor in India, was published at his own expense in twelve volumes, the first appearing in 1686: it contains an immense number of new plants.<sup>5</sup> The Herbarium Amboinense of Rumphius was collected in the seventeenth century, though not published till 1741.<sup>6</sup> Several botanical gardens were formed in different countries; among others, that of Chelsea was opened in 1686.<sup>7</sup>

31. It was impossible that men of inquiring tempers should not have been led to reflect on those remarkable phenomena of the earth's visible structure, which, being in course of time accurately registered and

Predecessors of Grew.

Malpighi.

Early notions of geology.

<sup>1</sup> Thomson's Hist. of Chemistry.

<sup>2</sup> Sprengel; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>3</sup> Sprengel, iii. 176. [It will be understood that the name "oxygen," though Sprengel uses it, is modern; and also that this gas is properly said to have been

discovered in 1774 by Priestley, who exhibited it in a separate state. — 1842.]

<sup>4</sup> Sprengel, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Biogr. Univ. The date of the first volume is given erroneously in the Biogr. Univ. <sup>6</sup> Id. <sup>7</sup> Sprengel; Pulteney

arranged, have become the basis of that noble science, the boast of our age,—geology. The first thing which must strike the eyes of the merest clown, and set the philosopher thinking, is the irregularity of the surface of our globe: the more this is observed, the more signs of violent disruption appear. Some, indeed, of whom Ray seems to have been one,<sup>1</sup> were so much impressed by the theory of final causes, that, perceiving the fitness of the present earth for its inhabitants, they thought it might have been created in such a state of physical ruin. But the contrary inference is almost irresistible. A still more forcible argument for great revolutions in the history of the earth is drawn from a second phenomenon of very general occurrence,—the marine and other fossil relics of organized beings, which are dug up in strata far remote from the places where these bodies could now exist. It was common to account for them by the Mosiac deluge. But the depth at which they are found was incompatible with this hypothesis. Others hurried them to be not really organized, but sports of nature, as they were called, the casual resemblances of shells and fishes in stone. The Italians took the lead in speculating on these problems; but they could only arrive now and then at a happier conjecture than usual, and do not seem to have planned any scheme of explaining the general structure of the earth.<sup>2</sup> The *Mundus Subterraneus* of Athanasius Kircher, famous for the variety and originality of his erudition, contains, probably, the geology of his age, or at least his own. It was published in 1662. Ten out of twelve books relate to the surface or the interior of the earth, and to various terrene productions; the remaining two to alchemy, and other arts connected with mineralogy. Kircher seems to have collected a great deal of geographical and geological knowledge. In England, the spirit of observation was so strong after the establishment of the Royal Society, that the *Philosophical Transactions* in this period contain a considerable number of geognostic papers; and the genius of theory was aroused, though not at first in his happiest mood.<sup>3</sup>

32. Thomas Burnet, master of the Charterhouse, a man fearless and somewhat rash, with more imagination than philosophy, but ingenious and eloquent, published in 1694 his *Theoria Telluris Sacra*, which he

<sup>1</sup> See Ray's *Three Physico-Theological Discourses* on the Creation, Deluge, and final Conflagration. 1692.

<sup>2</sup> Lyell's *Principles of Geology*, vol. 1. p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Thomson's *Hist. of Royal Society*.

afterwards translated into English. The primary question for the early geologists had always been, how to reconcile the phenomena with which they were acquainted to the Mosaic narratives of the creation and deluge. Every one was satisfied that his own theory was the best; but in every case it has hitherto proved, whatever may take place in future, that the proposed scheme has neither kept to the letter of Scripture, nor to the legitimate deductions of philosophy. Burnet gives the reins to his imagination more than any other writer on that, which, if not argued upon by inductive reasoning, must be the dream of one man, little better in reality, though it may be more amusing, than the dream of another. He seems to be eminently ignorant of geological facts, and has hardly ever recourse to them as evidence; and accordingly, though his book drew some attention as an ingenious romance, it does not appear that he made a single disciple. Whiston opposed Burnet's theory, but with one not less unfounded, nor with less ignorance of all that required to be known. Hooke, Lister, Ray, and Woodward came to the subject <sup>Other geologists.</sup> with more philosophical minds, and with a better insight into the real phenomena. Hooke seems to have displayed his usual sagacity in conjecture: he saw that the common theory of explaining marine fossils by the Mosaic deluge would not suffice, and perceived that, at some time or other, a part of the earth's crust must have been elevated and another part depressed by some subterraneous power. Lister was aware of the continuity of certain strata over large districts, and proposed the construction of geological maps. Woodward had a still more extensive knowledge of stratified rocks: he was in a manner the founder of scientific mineralogy in England; but his geological theory was not less chimerical than those of his contemporaries.<sup>1</sup> It was first published in the Philosophical Transactions for 1695.<sup>2</sup>

33. The *Protogæa* of Leibnitz appears, in felicity of conjecture and minute attention to facts, far above any of <sup>Protogæa of Leibnitz.</sup> these. But this short tract was only published in 1749; and, on reading it, I have found an intimation that it was not written within the seventeenth century. Yet I cannot refrain from mentioning that his hypothesis supposes the gradual cooling of the earth from igneous fusion; the formation of a vast body of water to cover the surface, a part of his

<sup>1</sup> Lyell, p. 31.<sup>2</sup> Thomson, p. 207.



theory but ill established; and apparently the weakest of the whole; the subsidence of the lower parts of the earth, which he takes to have been once on the level of the highest mountains, by the breaking-in of vaulted caverns within its bosom;<sup>1</sup> the deposition of sedimentary strata from inundations, their induration, and the subsequent covering of these by other strata through fresh inundations; with many other notions which have been gradually matured and rectified in the process of the science.<sup>2</sup> No one can read the Protogæa without perceiving, that of all the early geologists, or indeed of all down to a time not very remote, Leibnitz came nearest to the theories which are most received in the English school at this day. It is evident, that if the literal interpretation of Genesis, by a period of six natural days, had not restrained him, he would have gone much farther in his views of the progressive revolutions of the earth.<sup>3</sup> Leibnitz had made very minute inquiries for his age into fossil species, and was aware of the main facts which form the basis of modern geology.<sup>4</sup>

### SECT. III.—ON ANATOMY AND MEDICINE.

34. PORTAL begins the history of this period, which occupies more than 800 pages of his voluminous work, by announcing it as the epoch most favorable to anatomy: in less than fifty years, the science put on a new countenance; nature is

<sup>1</sup> Sect. 21. He admits also a partial elevation by intumescence, but says, "Ut vastissimæ Alpes ex solidâ jam terrâ eruptione surrexerint, minus consentaneum puto. Scimus tamen et in illis deprehendi reliquias maris. Cum ergo alterutrum factum oporteat, credibilius multo arbitror defluxisse aquas spontaneæ, quam ingentem terrarum partem incredibili violentiâ tam alte ascendisse." Sect. 22.

<sup>2</sup> "Facies teneri adhuc orbis sæpius novata est; donec quiescentibus causis atque æquilibratis, consistentior emergeret status rerum. Unde jam duplex origo intelligitur firmorum corporum; una cum ignis fusione refrigescerent, altera cum recondescerent ex solutione aquarum. Neque igitur putandum est lapides ex solâ esse fusione. Id enim potissimum de primâ

tantum massâ ex terræ basi accipio; nec dubito, postea materiam liquidam in superficie telluris procurrentem, quiete mox redditâ, ex ramentis subactis ingentem materiæ vim deposuisse, quorum alia varias terræ species formarunt, alia in saxa induruerunt, e quibus strata diversa sibi super imposita diversas præcipitationum vires atque intervalla testantur."—Sect. 4.

This he calls the incunabula of this world, and the basis of a new science, which might be denominated "naturalis geographia." But wisely adds, "Licet conspiciant vestigia veteris mundi in præsentis facie rerum, tamen rectius omnia deducunt posteri, ubi curiositas eo processerit, ut per regiones procurrentia soli genera et strata describant."—Sect. 5.

<sup>3</sup> See sect. 21, et alibi.

<sup>4</sup> Sect. 24, et usque ad finem libri.

interrogated; every part of the body is examined with an observing spirit; the mutual intercourse of nations diffuses the light on every side; a number of great men appear, whose genius and industry excite our admiration.<sup>1</sup> But, for this very reason, I must in these concluding pages glide over a subject rather foreign to my own studies, and to those of the generality of my readers, with a very brief enumeration of names.

85. The Harveian theory gained ground, though obstinate prejudice gave way but slowly. It was confirmed by the experiment of transfusing blood, tried on dogs, at the instance of Sir Christopher Wren, in 1657, and repeated by Lower in 1661.<sup>2</sup> Malpighi in 1661, and Leeuwenhoek in 1690, by means of their microscopes, demonstrated the circulation of the blood in the smaller vessels, and rendered visible the anastomoses of the arteries and veins, upon which the theory depended.<sup>3</sup> From this time, it seems to have been out of doubt. Pecquet's discovery of the thoracic duct (or rather of its uses, as a reservoir of the chyle from which the blood is elaborated, for the canal itself had been known to Eustachius) stands next to that of Harvey, which would have thrown less light on physiology without it; and, like his, was perseveringly opposed.<sup>4</sup>

36. Willis, a physician at Oxford, is called by Portal, who thinks all mankind inferior to anatomists, one of the greatest geniuses that ever lived: his bold systems have given him a distinguished place among physiologists.<sup>5</sup> His Anatomy of the Brain, in which, however, as in his other works, he was much assisted by an intimate friend and anatomist of the first character, Lower, is, according to the same writer, a masterpiece of imagination and labor. He made many discoveries in the structure of the brain, and has traced the nerves from it far better than his predecessors, who had, in general, very obscure ideas of their course. Sprengel says that Willis is the first who has assigned a peculiar mental function to each of the different parts of the brain; forgetting, as it seems, that this hypothesis, the basis of modern phrenology, had been generally received, as I understand his own account, in the sixteenth century.<sup>6</sup> Vieussens of Montpellier carried on the discoveries in the anatomy of the nerves, in his

<sup>1</sup> Hist de l'Anatomie, vol. iii. p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Sprengel, Hist. de la Médecine, vol. iv.

<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> Id., pp. 126, 142

<sup>5</sup> Portal; Sprengel.

<sup>6</sup> P. 88; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>7</sup> Sprengel, vol. iv. p. 250. Compare vol. iii. p. 204.

*Neurographia Universalis*, 1684; tracing those arising from the spinal marrow, which Willis had not done, and following the minute ramifications of those that are spread over the skin.<sup>1</sup>

37. Malpighi was the first who employed good microscopes in anatomy, and thus revealed the secrets, we may say, of an invisible world, which Leeuwenhoek afterwards, probably using still better instruments, explored with surprising success. To Malpighi, anatomists owe their knowledge of the structure of the lungs.<sup>2</sup> Graaf has overthrown many errors, and suggested many truths, in the economy of generation.<sup>3</sup> Malpighi prosecuted this inquiry with his microscope, and first traced the progress of the egg during incubation. But the theory of evolution, as it is called, proposed by Harvey, and supported by Malpighi, received a shock by Leeuwenhoek's or Hartsoeker's discovery of spermatic animalcules, which apparently opened a new view of reproduction. The hypothesis they suggested became very prevalent for the rest of the seventeenth century, though it is said to have been shaken early in the next.<sup>4</sup> Borelli applied mathematical principles to muscular movements in his treatise *De Motu Animalium*. Though he is a better mathematician than anatomist, he produces many interesting facts; the mechanical laws are rightly applied, and his method is clear and consequent.<sup>5</sup> Duverney, in his *Treatise on Hearing*, in 1683, his only work, obtained a considerable reputation: it threw light on many parts of a delicate organ, which, by their minuteness, had long baffled the anatomist.<sup>6</sup> In Mayow's *Treatise on Respiration*, published in London, 1668, we find the necessity of what is now called oxygen to that function laid down; but this portion of the atmosphere had been discovered by Bathurst and Henshaw in 1654, and Hooke had shown by experiment that animals die when the air is deprived of it.<sup>7</sup> Ruysch, a Dutch physician, perfected the art of injecting anatomical preparations, hardly known before; and thus conferred an inestimable benefit on the science. He possessed a celebrated cabinet of natural history.<sup>8</sup>

38. The chemical theory of medicine, which had descended

<sup>1</sup> Portal, vol. iv. p. 5; Sprengel, p. 256; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>2</sup> Portal, vol. iii. p. 120; Sprengel, p. 678.

<sup>3</sup> Portal, iii. 219, Sprengel, p. 308

<sup>4</sup> Sprengel, p. 309.

<sup>5</sup> Portal, iii. 245; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>6</sup> Portal, p. 464; Sprengel, p. 238

<sup>7</sup> Sprengel, iii. 179, 181.

<sup>8</sup> Id., p. 259; Biogr. Univ.

from Paracelsus through Van Helmont, was propagated chiefly by Sylvius, a physician of Holland, who is reckoned the founder of what was called the chemi-<sup>Medical theories.</sup>atric school. His works were printed at Amsterdam in 1679; but he had promulgated his theory from the middle of the century. His leading principle was, that a perpetual fermentation goes on in the human body, from the deranged action of which diseases proceed; most of them from excess of acidity, though a few are of alkaline origin. "He degraded the physician," says Sprengel, "to the level of a distiller or a brewer."<sup>1</sup> This writer is very severe on the chemiatrie school, one of their offences in his eyes being their recommendation of tea; "the cupidity of Dutch merchants conspiring with their medical theories." It must be owned, that, when we find them prescribing also a copious use of tobacco, it looks as if the trade of the doctor went hand in hand with those of his patients. Willis, in England, was a partisan of the chemiatries,<sup>2</sup> and they had a great influence in Germany; though in France the attachment of most physicians to the Hippocratic and Galenic methods, which brought upon them so many imputations of pedantry, was little abated. A second school of medicine, which superseded this, is called the iatro-mathematical. This seems to have arisen in Italy. Borelli's application of mechanical principles to the muscles has been mentioned above. These physicians sought to explain every thing by statical and hydraulic laws: they were, therefore, led to study anatomy, since it was only by an accurate knowledge of all the parts that they could apply their mathematics. John Bernouilli even taught them to employ the differential calculus in explaining the bodily functions.<sup>3</sup> But this school seems to have had the same leading defect as the chemiatrie: it forgot the peculiarity of the laws of organization and life, which often render those of inert matter inapplicable. Pitcairn and Boerhaave were leaders of the iatro-mathematicians; and Mead was reckoned the last of its distinguished patrons.<sup>4</sup> Meantime, a third school of medicine grew up, denominated the empirical; a name to be used in a good sense, as denoting their regard to observation and experience, or the Baconian principles of philosophy. Sydenham was the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. v. p. 51; Biogr. Univ.

<sup>2</sup> Sprengel, p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> Id., p. 159.

<sup>4</sup> Id., p. 182. See Biographie Universelle, art. "Boerhaave," for a general criticism of the iatro-mathematicians.



first of these in England: but they gradually prevailed, to the exclusion of all systematic theory. The discovery of several medicines, especially the Peruvian bark, which was first used in Spain about 1640, and in England about 1654, contributed to the success of the empirical physicians, since the efficacy of some of these could not be explained on the hypotheses hitherto prevalent.<sup>1</sup>

#### SECT. IV.—ON ORIENTAL LITERATURE.

39. THE famous Polyglot of Brian Walton was published in 1657: but few copies appear to have been sold before the restoration of Charles II. in 1660, since those are very scarce which contain in the preface the praise of Cromwell for having facilitated and patronized the undertaking; praise replaced in the change of times by a loyal eulogy on the king. This Polyglot is in nine languages; though no one book of the Bible is printed in so many. Walton's Prolegomena are in sixteen chapters or dissertations. His learning, perhaps, was greater than his critical acuteness or good sense: such at least is the opinion of Simon and Le Long. The former, in a long examination of Walton's Prolegomena, treats him with all the superiority of a man who possessed both. Walton was assailed by some bigots at home for acknowledging various readings in the Scriptures, and for denying the authority of the vowel-punctuation. His Polyglot is not reckoned so magnificent as the Parisian edition of Le Long; but it is fuller and more convenient.<sup>2</sup> Edmund Castell, the condutor of Walton in this work, published his *Lexicon Heptaglotton* in 1669, upon which he had consumed eighteen years and the whole of his substance. This is frequently sold together with the Polyglot.

40. Hottinger of Zurich, by a number of works on the Eastern languages, and especially by the *Bibliotheca Orientalis* in 1658, established a reputation which these books no longer retain since the whole field of Oriental

<sup>1</sup> Sprengel, p. 413.

<sup>2</sup> Simon, *Hist. Critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 541; Chalmers; *Biogr. Britan.*

*Biogr. Univ.*; Brunet, *Man. du Libraire*.

literature has been more fully explored. Spencer, in a treatise of great erudition, *De Legibus Hebræorum*, 1685, gave some offence by the suggestion, that several of the Mosaic institutions were borrowed from the Egyptian, though the general scope of the Jewish law was in opposition to the idolatrous practices of the neighboring nations. The vast learning of Bochart expanded itself over Oriental antiquity, especially that of which the Hebrew nation and language is the central point; but his etymological conjectures have long since been set aside, and he has not in other respects, escaped the fate of the older Orientalists.

41. The great services of Pococke to Arabic literature which had commenced in the earlier part of the century, were extended to the present. His edition and translation of the *Annals of Eutychius* in 1658, that of the *History of Abulfaragius* in 1663, with many other works of a similar nature, bear witness to his industry: no Englishman probably has ever contributed so much to that province of learning.<sup>1</sup> A fine edition of the *Koran*, and still esteemed the best, was due to Marracci, professor of Arabic in the *Sapienza* or University of Rome, and published, at the expense of Cardinal Barbadigo, in 1698.<sup>2</sup> But France had an Orientalist of the most extensive learning in D'Herbelot, whose *Bibliothèque Orientale* must be considered as making an epoch in this literature. It was published in 1697, after his death, by Galland, who had also some share in arranging the materials. This work, it has been said, is for the seventeenth century what the *History of the Huns* by De Guignes is for the eighteenth; with this difference, that D'Herbelot opened the road, and has often been copied by his successor.<sup>3</sup>

42. Hyde, in his *Religionis Persarum Historia*, published in 1700, was the first who illustrated in a systematic manner the religion of Zoroaster, which he always represents in a favorable manner. The variety and novelty of its contents gave this book a credit, which, in some degree, it preserves; but Hyde was ignorant of the ancient language of Persia, and is said to have been often misled by Mohammedan authorities.<sup>4</sup> The vast increase of Oriental information in modern times, as has been intimated above, renders it

<sup>1</sup> Chalmers; *Biogr. Univ.*  
<sup>2</sup> Tiraboschi, xl. 393.

<sup>3</sup> *Biographie Universelle.*  
<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

difficult for any work of the seventeenth century to keep its ground. In their own times, the writings of Kircher on China, and still more those of Ludolf on Abyssinia, which were founded on his own knowledge of the country, claimed a respectable place in Oriental learning. It is remarkable that very little was yet known of the Indian languages, though grammars existed of the Tamul, and perhaps some others, before the close of the seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup>

### SECT. V.—ON GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.

43. THE progress of geographical science long continued to be slow. If we compare the map of the world in Maps of the  
Sanson. 1651 by Nicolas Sanson, esteemed on all sides the best geographer of his age, with one by his son in 1692, the differences will not appear, perhaps, so considerable as we might have expected. Yet some improvement may be detected by the eye. Thus the Caspian Sea has assumed its longer diameter from north to south, contrary to the old map. But the Sea of Aral is still wanting. The coasts of New Holland, except to the east, are tolerably laid down; and Corea is a peninsula instead of an island. Cambalu, the imaginary capital of Tartary, has disappeared;<sup>2</sup> but a vast lake is placed in the centre of that region: the Altai range is carried far too much to the north, and the name of Siberia seems unknown. Africa and America have nearly the same outline as before: in the former, the empire of Monomotapa stretches to join that of Abyssinia in about the 12th degree of south latitude; and the Nile still issues, as in all the old maps, from a Lake Zayre, in nearly the same parallel. The coasts of Europe, and especially of Scandinavia, are a little more accurate than before. The Sanson family, of whom several were publishers of maps, did not take pains enough to improve what their father had executed, though they might have had material helps from the astronomical observations which were now continually made in different parts of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Kuhn, *Gesch. der Cultur*, v. 209.

<sup>2</sup> The Cambalu of Marco Polo is probably Pekin; but the geographers frequently placed this capital of Tartary north of the Wall of China.

44. Such was the state of geography, when, in 1699, De Lisle, the real founder of the science, at the age of twenty-four, published his map of the world. He had been guided by the observations, and worked under the directions, of Cassini, whose tables of the emersion of Jupiter's satellites, calculated for the meridian of Bologna, in 1668, and, with much improvement, for that of Paris, in 1693, had prepared the way for the perfection of geography. The latitudes of different regions had been tolerably ascertained by observation; but no good method of determining the longitude had been known before this application of Galileo's great discovery. It is evident, that, the appearance of one of those satellites at Paris being determined by the tables to a precise instant, the means were given, with the help of sufficient clocks, to find the longitudinal distance of other places by observing the difference of time; and thus, a great number of observations having gradually been made, a basis was laid for an accurate delineation of the surface of the globe. The previous state of geography, and the imperfect knowledge which the mere experience of navigators could furnish, may be judged by the fact, that the Mediterranean Sea was set down with an excess of 300 leagues in length, being more than one-third of the whole. De Lisle reduced it within its bounds, and cut off at the same time 500 leagues from the longitude of Eastern Asia. This was the commencement of the geographical labors of De Lisle, which reformed, in the first part of the eighteenth century, not only the general outline of the world, but the minuter relations of various countries. His maps amount to more than one hundred sheets.<sup>1</sup>

45. The books of travels, in the last fifty years of the seventeenth century, were far more numerous and more valuable than in any earlier period; but we have no space for more than a few names. Genelli Carreri, a Neapolitan, is the first who claims to have written an account of his own travels round the world, describing Asia and America with much detail. His *Giro del Mondo* was published in 1699. Carreri has been strongly suspected of fabrication, and even of having never seen the countries which describes; but his character, I know not with what

<sup>1</sup> *Eloge de De Lisle*, in *Œuvres de Fontenelle*, vol. vi. p. 253; *Eloge* vol. v. p. 323; *Biogr. Univ.*



has been latterly vindicated.<sup>1</sup> The French justly boast the excellent travels of Chardin, Bernier, Thevenot, and Tavernier, in the East: the account of the Indian Archipelago and of China by Nieuhoff, employed in a Dutch embassy to the latter empire, is said to have been interpolated by the editors, though he was an accurate and faithful observer.<sup>2</sup> Several other relations of voyages were published in Holland, some of which can only be had in the native language. In English, there were not many of high reputation: Dampier's Voyage round the World, the first edition of which was in 1697, is better known than any which I can call to mind.

46. The general characteristics of historians of this period are neither a luminous philosophy, nor a rigorous examination of evidence. But, as before, we mention only a few names in this extensive province of literature.

*De Solis.* The History of the Conquest of Mexico by Antonio de Solis is "the last good work," says Sismondi, perhaps too severely as to others, "that Spain has produced; the best where purity of taste, simplicity and truth, are preserved: the imagination, of which the author had given so many proofs, does not appear."<sup>3</sup> Bousterwek is not less favorable; but Robertson, who holds De Solis rather cheap as an historian, does not fail to censure even his style.

47. The French have some authors of history, who, by their elegance and perspicuity, might deserve notice; such as St. Real, Father D'Orleans, and even Varillas, proverbially discredited as he is for want of veracity. The Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz rise above these: their animated style, their excellent portraiture of character, their acute and brilliant remarks, distinguish their pages, as much as the similar qualities did their author. "They are written," says Voltaire, "with an air of greatness, an impetuosity and an inequality which are the image of his life: his expression, sometimes incorrect, often negligent, but almost always original, recalls continually to his readers what has been so frequently said of Cæsar's Commentaries, that he wrote with the same spirit that he carried on his wars."<sup>4</sup> The Memoirs of Grammont, by Antony Hamilton, scarcely challenge a place as historical; but we are now looking more at the style

<sup>1</sup> Tiraboschi, xl. 86; Salfi, xl. 442.

<sup>2</sup> Biogr. Univ.

<sup>3</sup> Littérature du Midi, lv. 101

<sup>4</sup> Biogr. Univ. whence I take the quotation.

than the intrinsic importance of books. Every one is aware of the peculiar felicity and fascinating gayety which they display.

48. The Discourse of Bossuet on Universal History is perhaps the greatest effort of his wonderful genius. Every preceding abridgment of so immense a subject had been superficial and dry. He first irradiated the entire annals of antiquity down to the age of Charlemagne with flashes of light that reveal an unity and coherence which had been lost in their magnitude and obscurity. It is not perhaps an unfair objection, that, in a history calling itself that of all mankind, the Jewish people have obtained a disproportionate regard; and it might be almost as reasonable, on religious grounds, to give Palestine an ampler space in the map of the world, as, on a like pretext, to make the scale of the Jewish history so much larger than that of the rest of the human race. The plan of Bossuet has at least divided his book into two rather heterogeneous portions. But his conceptions of Greek, and still more of Roman history, are generally magnificent; profound in philosophy, with an outline firm and sufficiently exact, never condescending to trivial remarks or petty details; above all, written in that close and nervous style, which no one, certainly in the French language, has ever surpassed. It is evident that Montesquieu in all his writings, but especially in the *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains*, had the Discourse of Bossuet before his eyes: he is more acute sometimes, and ingenious, and has reflected longer on particular topics of inquiry; but he wants the simple majesty, the comprehensive eagle-like glance, of the illustrious prelate.

49. Though we fell short in England of the historical reputation which the first part of the century might entitle us to claim, this period may be reckoned that in which a critical attention to truth, sometimes rather too minute, but always praiseworthy, began to be characteristic of our researches into fact. The only book that I shall mention is Burnet's History of the Reformation, written in a better style than those, who know Burnet by his later and more negligent work, are apt to conceive, and which has the signal merit of having been the first in English, as far as I remember, which is fortified by a large appendix of documents. This, though frequent in Latin, had not been so usual in the modern languages. It became gradu-

Bossuet on  
Universal  
History.

English  
historical  
works.

Burnet.

ally very frequent and almost indispensable in historical writings, where the materials had any peculiar originality.

50. The change in the spirit of literature and of the public mind in general, which had with gradual and never receding steps been coming forward in the seventeenth century, but especially in the latter part of it, has been so frequently pointed out to the readers of this and the last volume, that I shall only quote an observation of Bayle. "I believe," he says, "that the sixteenth century produced a greater number of learned men than the seventeenth; and yet the former of these ages was far from being as enlightened as the latter. During the reign of criticism and philology, we saw in all Europe many prodigies of erudition. Since the study of the new philosophy and that of living languages has introduced a different taste, we have ceased to behold this vast and deep learning. But, in return, there is diffused through the republic of letters a more subtle understanding and a more exquisite discernment: men are now less learned, but more able."<sup>1</sup> The volumes which are now submitted to the public contain sufficient evidence of this intellectual progress both in philosophy and in polite literature.

51. I here terminate a work, which, it is hardly necessary to say, has furnished the occupation of not very few years, and which, for several reasons, it is not my intention to prosecute any farther. The length of these volumes is already greater than I had anticipated; yet I do not perceive much that could have been retrenched, without loss to a part, at least, of the literary world. For the approbation which the first of them has received, I am grateful; for the few corrections that have been communicated to me, I am not less so: the errors and deficiencies of which I am not specially aware may be numerous; yet I cannot affect to doubt that I have contributed something to the general literature of my country, something to the honorable estimation of my own name, and to the inheritance of those, if it is for me still to cherish that hope, to whom I have to bequeath it.

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionnaire de Bayle*, art. "Aconce," note D.

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